













THE  
AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

AND THE  
BAPTISTS;

OR,  
THE QUESTION DISCUSSED,

SHALL THE WHOLE WORD OF GOD BE GIVEN TO THE  
HEATHEN?

CONSISTING OF FOUR PARTS,

With a Preface, by Rev. R. Babcock, Jr., D.D.

I. The Proceedings of the American Bible Society in relation to the Baptists, drawn from Official Documents by one of the Corresponding Secretaries.

II. The Circular of the American Bible Society, giving their reasons for rejecting the Baptist versions of the Scriptures in India.

III. An Examination of the Circular.

IV. Appendix—A Summary account of Ancient and Modern Versions of Scripture, with reference to their treatment of βαπτίζω and its Cognates.

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## P R E F A C E .

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Is another publication needed on this vexed question,—the controversy between the American Bible Society and the Baptists? This will naturally enough be the inquiry, of friends and enemies—and we proceed very briefly to answer it. For three distinct classes of the community, namely—the advocates of the Bible Society as now conducted,—the impartial public,—and the Baptists themselves, some farther exhibition of the principal points of this controversy is needful.

When the moments of excitement incident to the partizan nature of this movement have passed away and cool retrospection has exerted its purifying influence, it can scarce fail to occasion regret at least, that a large denomination of Christians—the early and steadfast friends of the Bible cause—have been driven from the Society by a new and unexpected measure, adapted and intended to restrain them from the conscientious discharge of an imperative and most important duty, or cut them off from accustomed participation in the benefits of the Association. If there be a tithe of the genuine liberality and real brotherliness among Pedo-baptists which is professed, if “exclusiveness,” and “barriers to a more perfect union,” be aught with them but party watch-words, used against others for a sectarian and sinister purpose, then assuredly there will come a time when those who have done this thing, and those who are responsible for its continuance,

will feel constrained with anxious solicitude to review the whole ground of this procedure. Then at least will all the material facts in the case, and the arguments on both sides of the question be in requisition by the present dominant party.

The disinterested public will also be disposed to learn something of the manner in which important trusts of a very delicate and sacred character are discharged by those to whose hands they had been confided. Our great benevolent institutions are deservedly attracting a large share of public attention, and they require to be watched, if not with suspicion, at least with sleepless vigilance. But they cannot be watched without light. The amplest information is requisite. That colossal form of religious perversion and despotism, the pontifical power of the Romish church, grew up gradually, and from small beginnings. The first wrong step may have been regarded as insignificant, certainly not more alarming, than forbidding to translate *a few words of the Bible* into the language of the people. But it went on—and why should it not by the same principle—to a practical denial of the whole word of God to the people. The only safe course is, to resist evil in the beginning,—at the very threshold.

Furthermore, the public will naturally inquire whether engaging in this holy work has been productive of the pure, expansive, unselfish spirit, which the founders of the American Bible Society exulted in contemplating as its sure result. Whether in its management, all practical measures have been resorted to, for preventing a rupture in an enterprise which ought to concentrate upon itself the love and activity of all who prize the Bible. They will wish to hear the Managers' defence of a course of proceedings so untoward in its influence, and they will also,

it is hoped, evince the commendable candour to examine that defence, and adjust its merits by the scale of facts and sound arguments.

But a work like this is certainly needed among the Baptists themselves. They have a right and claim to be put in possession of all the facts which have a bearing so direct and extensive on their own vital interests. To a very wide extent they yet remain uninformed on this subject. This may seem a direct contradiction of the implication by the Managers in their sneer at us, as "the professed sons of peace," while in reality engaged in raising an uncommon amount of opposition to them and their institution. So far is this from being true, that instances are constantly occurring, where decided Baptists, unconscious of the obnoxious resolutions which cut us off from an equal participation in the societies' appropriations, are still giving large sums to its treasury.\*

Under these circumstances, Baptist pastors, not deficient in zeal for their own institutions, have been so *truly* as well as "professedly sons of peace," as to have entirely abstained from all public exhibition or discussion of what they regard as the flagrant wrong inflicted on them by the American Bible Society. This volume will there-

\* One case of this kind recently occurred not a hundred miles from New-York city, where a venerable and generous Baptist brother gave \$1000 dollars to the American Bible Society, fully supposing that his own brethren were allowed to share, as formerly, its appropriations in aid of their endeavours to give the Bible fully and faithfully translated to heathen nations. He intended to follow this sum with another of twice the amount. Whether the Managers' circular has yet reached him, and opened his eyes, is uncertain; but assuredly this volume ought to be put into his hands. Can Baptists be blamed for thus protecting their own interests?

fore be to them a desideratum, and ought to be circulated so widely as to reach every intelligent family and individual among the millions of Baptists in this country.

Another important service will be indirectly accomplished by it, in assisting to disabuse the minds of our neighbours with respect to the real intention and operation of the American and Foreign Bible Society. With almost unprecedented unanimity the voice of the denomination called for the formation of this institution, when the American Bible Society made itself sectarian by changing its original policy. In every part of the country they have responded to the call made upon them to aid the American and Foreign Bible Society, to give the Bible translated to the world.

In four or five years they have thus accomplished four times as much for this great enterprise, as they had received from the American Bible Society, during the whole period of their connexion with it. But while thus laudably and with singleness of purpose, engaged in this great work, (in order to accomplish which, be it remembered, they had been driven into this separate organization) they have been constantly assailed and grossly misrepresented, as having entered into some foul conspiracy against the integrity of the Scriptures. Thousands of the less intelligent among our neighbours, the Pedo-baptists, seem to believe, (it is presumed, *as they have been taught* by those who ought to know better) that the Baptists are endeavouring to introduce a new Bible, and to corrupt the word of God. This volume will help to undeceive them, by showing the necessity laid upon us for originating another society.

Having shown the desirableness of the present publication, it only remains to consider the manner in which the

service of preparing it has been performed. This volume will be found to combine the following excellencies :

1. It presents in a convenient and cheap form for easy reference and wide distribution, all the material facts and arguments in this controversy ; not garbled and misrepresented, but official and un mutilated. The commendable candour of furnishing entire the defence put forth by the American Bible Society's Managers, furnishes an example which ought to be imitated on the other side.

2. The examination of this defence, while thorough, searching and conclusive, is throughout conducted with a decorum and Christian urbanity that cannot fail to produce a happy effect on the reader. In this respect it may be regarded as an uncommonly faultless specimen of the proper manner of conducting a religious controversy.

3. The learned reader will find in the Appendix an array of facts from unquestionable sources which will greatly facilitate the wise, faithful, and we hope, speedy adjustment of this controversy. Had the facts there embodied been present to the minds of the Managers, could they in 1836 have passed these restrictive resolutions, and in 1841, attempted to defend them ? We commend the Appendix as well as the examination of their defence, to the special consideration of the Managers.

4. It may be reasonably hoped, that so far as controversy is concerned, this volume will be final. The Managers have chosen their own ground after a long time for preparation ; and their full defence is here given to those who have not before had opportunity to read it, accompanied with such a rejoinder as will probably satisfy those whom it defends. May it not be reasonably hoped that strife and contention will henceforth cease ? That both

parties in this controversy will turn their thoughts to some feasible plan of adjusting this painful difficulty? Or if that cannot be secured, that like Abraham and Lot, with their respective servants, the two institutions may henceforth choose their respective spheres, and prosecute their high purposes with no strife between them.

R. B.

*Poughkeepsie*, 2d October, 1841.

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NOTE.—A portion of the Third Part of this volume has been published in consecutive numbers of the periodical edited by the author. This circumstance is mentioned to account for peculiarities of phraseology, which may be deemed more suitable to a periodical than to a book. We would also mention that we are indebted to Mr. John F. Trow, Printer, of this city, for the Syriac, Arabic, Persic and Ethiopic type used in the Appendix.

THE  
AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY  
AND  
THE BAPTISTS.

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THE following brief sketch of the proceedings of the Board of Managers of the American Bible Society, relative to the Baptist versions of the Scriptures in Asia, may be regarded as official. It was prepared by the Rev. SPENCER H. CONE, who at the time was one of the Corresponding Secretaries of the institution, and the documents which it embraces were copied from the records of the Society.

PROCEEDINGS, &c.

Am. Bib. Society's House, New-York, Aug. 6th, 1835.

At the regular meeting of the Board of Managers, Mr. Brigham presented a letter from F. A. Packard, dated Philadelphia, July 28, 1835, sending an extract from a letter addressed to him by Mr. Pearce, of Calcutta, Baptist Missionary, asking whether aid could be had from the American Bible Society, in printing the Bengalee Scriptures, translated on the principle adopted by the American Baptist Missionaries in Burmah.

The letter was referred to the Committee on distribution.

Bible Society's House, September 3, 1835.

The Committee on distribution reported the following resolution, as the result of their deliberations upon the subject referred to them at the last meeting of the Board, viz :

*“Resolved, That the Committee do not deem it expedient to recommend an appropriation, until the Board settle a principle in relation to the translation of the Greek word Baptizo.”*

After discussion, the resolution was passed, and the subject referred to a special committee of seven, one from each denomination represented in the Board of Managers, viz :

THOMAS MACAULEY, *Chairman.*

SPENCER H. CONE,

FRANCIS HALL,

JAMES MILNOR,

WM. H. VAN VLECK,

THOS. DEWITT,

THOMAS COCK.

Bible Society's House, October 1, 1835.

The Special Committee presented the following Report :

The Committee to whom was referred the report of the Distributing Committee on the application of Messrs. Pearce and Yates, of Calcutta, for aid to print the New Testament in the Bengalee language, beg leave to report, that they have attended to the important subject committed to them, and that in the investigation of it, the following facts have come before them.

1. The Rev. Messrs. Pearce and Yates, Baptist Missionaries in or near Calcutta, have made application to this Board, for aid in publishing the New Testament in the Bengalee language, in which version the Greek words



*Baptizo*, *Baptisma*, and their cognates, are translated by words signifying *immerse*, *immersion*, &c.

2. In the Burmese version of the New Testament, and in other versions in the languages and dialects of India, these words are translated in like manner.

3. Application has been made to the Calcutta Bible Society, and to the British and Foreign Bible Society, for aid to print and circulate the Bengalee New Testament, translated as aforesaid, which aid has been refused on the ground of its containing said translations; and

4. Your Committee were not aware until now, that such translations were made and approved by any denomination of Christians in India, or other heathen countries.

Your Committee would therefore most respectfully submit, whether it is not highly inexpedient to aid in printing or circulating any version of the Scriptures containing the above or any similar translations, differing from the sense of the authorized versions, for the following reasons:

1. The words *Baptizo* and *Baptisma*, and their cognates, being left untranslated, as in the English and many other excellent versions, imposes no difficulty on any denomination of Christians, as it leaves every minister, or missionary, at perfect liberty to explain them according to the peculiar views of his particular denomination.

2. The words *Baptizo*, *Baptisma*, &c., being translated *immerse*, *immersion*, &c., will necessarily embarrass, if not wholly exclude the operations of Missionaries of the Methodist, Moravian, Reformed Dutch, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Congregational, or other Christian denominations, who may endeavour to propagate the gospel in India, or where the said translation may obtain. And

3. It is not competent for the American Bible Society to assume any sectarian attitude by favouring the denomi-

national views of any particular church either at home or abroad.

With these views of the subject, your Committee most respectfully submit the following resolutions :

1. *Resolved*, That the Board of Managers deem it inexpedient to appropriate any funds belonging to the Society, in aid of translating or distributing the aforesaid Bengalee New Testament, or any other version containing the aforesaid translations, or any similar translations.

2. *Resolved*, That the Board of Managers on receiving satisfactory evidence of such corrections having been made in the aforesaid translation of the Bengalee New Testament, or other versions in other languages, or dialects, as will comport with the known views of other Christian denominations ; or, in other words, with the obvious intention of the authorized English version, will most cheerfully aid in the printing and circulation of said version or versions as heretofore.

3. *Resolved*, That all persons interested in the foregoing resolutions be informed of their purport forthwith.

All which is most respectfully submitted.

THOMAS MACAULEY, *Chairman*.

JAMES MILNOR,

THOMAS DEWITT,

THOMAS COCK,

FRANCIS HALL,

WM. H. VAN VLECK.

## COUNTER REPORT.

The Committee to whom was referred the application of Messrs. Pearce and Yates, of Calcutta, for aid to print and circulate the New Testament in the Bengalee language, have not been so happy as to unite in their views

upon the subject; and the subscriber deems it a duty he owes both to the American Bible Society, and to the Baptist denomination, briefly to state some of the considerations which have constrained him to dissent from the report presented by the majority of the Committee.

At the anniversary in May, 1834, the American Bible Society resolved to distribute the Bible among all the accessible population of the globe, within the shortest practicable period; and by direction of the Board of Managers, a circular was addressed to missionaries and missionary societies of different religious denominations, encouraging them to expect, that whenever the Old Testament or the New, or any one entire Gospel or other book of the Bible, should be correctly translated and ready (without note or comment) for the press, they should receive the aid requisite for the publication of the same. The application of Messrs. Pearce and Yates is but a response to this circular, and it is manifestly unjust to refuse their request, on the ground of their having rendered the words *Baptizo*, *Baptisma*, and their cognates, by words signifying *Immerse*, *Immersion*, &c., until it is first proved that the translations are unfaithful and inaccurate; and this it is confidently believed never can be done.

When missionaries are sent among the heathen, it is that they may make themselves thoroughly acquainted with their language, and with as little delay as possible, give them the Bible in appropriate vernacular terms, *that they may read in their own tongue wherein they were born, the wonderful works of God*. They must neither obscure, nor take from, nor add to, the words of the Holy Book. The question, therefore, is most respectfully submitted, whether it is competent for the American Bible Society to control the consciences of well qualified evan-

gelical missionaries in this matter, and decide *what words they shall transfer*, and what words *they may translate*.

It is conceived that the *principle* reported by the majority of the Committee on this point, is radically wrong ; if so, the Board of Managers have no right to forbid the translation of *Baptizo*, or of *any other word*, the meaning of which is satisfactorily ascertained ; but if the principle objected to be correct, then their authoritative dictation may embrace whatever words to them shall seem good ; and the missionary hereafter in the work of translation, instead of making it his single aim to please God, must consult primarily the views and wishes of earthly patrons.

It is a source of deep regret that the pervading sentiment of the report of the majority, appears to be so entirely inconsistent with the spirit of benevolence and brotherly kindness which first called into existence the American Bible Society. Seven or eight different denominations of Christians associated themselves together for the purpose of supplying not only their own land with the Scriptures, but of extending their influence to other countries whether Christian, Mahomedan or Pagan. In the prosecution of their common object, no one of the constituent members was either required or expected to abandon his own peculiar tenets. Baptists were received *as Baptists*, and as such have laboured with you from the beginning.

Must it not occasion surprise as well as grief that now, after an harmonious co-operation in the Bible cause of more than eighteen years, it is proposed to pass the sweeping uncompromising resolution, "*that it is inexpedient to appropriate any funds belonging to the Society in aid of translating or distributing any versions of the Sacred Scriptures as now made by the Baptist Missionaries.*" Are we by this single vote to be cut off for ever

from all participation in your funds, a large portion of which has accrued from the subscriptions and liberal bequests of our denomination? And are Baptist missionaries of all others to be singled out as unworthy to share in the labours and successes of the American Bible Society in her noble enterprise *to supply the world with Bibles*? And are we to be told in so many words, that the only condition upon which you can countenance our efforts is the preparation of such versions as will comport with the known views of other Christian denominations? a condition which involves in it the impracticable alternative of forbearing to do that which in our hearts we believe God has required at our hands.

The idea suggested that versions to be approved must not materially differ from the "*sense of the authorized English version*," is most strange. We have been taught to believe that the sense of the Holy Ghost is to be invariably and most critically preserved. The sentiment may be very gratifying in its adaptation to a special case, but the majority of the Committee would scarcely advocate it, as a general principle applicable to Biblical translations. The man who should translate *meta to pascha*, Acts xii. 4, by a phrase signifying *after Easter*, would give the sense of the English version; but, alas! he would not convey the sense of the Spirit of inspiration.

The words *Baptizo*, &c., have been rendered by words signifying to *Immerse*, &c., in the Syriac, Arabic, Abyssinian, Egyptian, Ethiopic, Coptic, German, Dutch, Danish, and many other languages. Is it just, is it fair then, *to stigmatize our translations as sectarian*, when similar translations have been long in use in almost all the churches of the Eastern world, and in most of the churches of Northern Europe? The American Bible Society has

circulated many copies of the Bible "containing the aforesaid translations;" she has circulated many more in the versions of Roman Catholic Priests. She has voted within two years past a larger sum for the Chinese Scriptures, than for any other foreign object, and yet Dr. Morrison has neither *transferred Baptizo nor translated it*, but has introduced into his Chinese version a paraphrase signifying "a water Ceremony."\*

In connexion with these facts let it be remembered, that the American Christian public expect us speedily to send the Bible throughout the earth; that they are generously furnishing us with the means to accomplish this desirable object! that our Treasury is overflowing, and the managers are at a loss to know how their surplus funds may be wisely and beneficially expended; that the Baptist missionaries have translated the Scriptures into the languages of India, as well as of other Asiatic nations; *that to refuse them aid, will at least be greatly to retard, if not to render impracticable for a long time to come, the supply of the reading population of the Globe with the written word?* and, oh! let it not be forgotten, that millions of our fellow men are perishing for the bread of life, and stretching out their hands, are crying, "Come over and help us!" In view of these facts let it be asked, is this the time, and are these the circumstances, which the Board will choose, to announce to the Saints of the Most High their rejection of the application of those men of God, who for more than twenty years under the burning

\* In a letter received, since the presentation of this Counter Report, from Mr. Dyer, Corresponding Secretary of the English Baptist Missionary Society, he says, "I have understood that Dr. Morrison has rendered *Baptizo* by a word signifying to *wet*, to *moisten*."

rays of an Indian sun, have been praying, and toiling, and agonizing, for the souls of men? WE HOPE NOT; and under the influence of this hope, venture to propose the following resolutions, viz:

1. *Resolved*, That this Board is impressed with feelings of devout gratitude to Almighty God, for the signal protection he has afforded to Baptist missionaries in heathen lands, and for the ability given them to translate the Bible into the living languages of so large a portion of the human family.

2. As satisfactory evidence has been furnished from the principal professors in the College of Fort William, India, and from the most learned Pundits and Teachers in Calcutta and its vicinity, that the improved version of the Bengalee New Testament by Messrs. Pearce and Yates, Baptist missionaries, is by far the most intelligible, idiomatic, and perfect translation, which has yet appeared in that dialect; therefore,

*Resolved*, That the sum of \$        be appropriated and paid to the Baptist General Convention of the United States for Foreign Missions, to aid in printing and circulating the Sacred Scriptures in the Bengalee language.

Respectfully submitted,

SPENCER H. CONE.

Society's House, November 5, 1835.

The Board proceeded to consider the reports of the Committee presented at the last meeting.

Mr. Brigham read a letter from Dr. Wayland, dated Providence, October 26, 1835, submitting a resolution; Dr. Milnor also presented a series of resolutions. After some discussion, the letter of Dr. Wayland, the resolutions

of Dr. Milnor, and the original reports, were all referred back to the same Committee for further consideration and report.

Society's House, November 19, 1835.

The following Report and Counter Report were presented :

The Committee to whom was recommitted the determining of a principle upon which the American Bible Society will aid in printing and distributing the Bible in foreign languages, beg leave to report :

That they are of the opinion, that it is expedient to withdraw their former report *on the particular case*, and to present the following one *on the general principle*.

By the constitution of the American Bible Society, its Managers are, in the circulating of the Holy Scriptures, restricted to such copies as are without note or comment, and in the English language, to the version in common use. The design of these restrictions clearly seems to have been to simplify and mark out the duties of the Society; so that all the religious denominations, of which it is composed, might harmoniously unite in performing those duties.

As the Managers are now called to aid extensively in circulating the Sacred Scriptures in languages other than the English, they deem it their duty, in conformity with the obvious spirit of their compact, to adopt the following resolution as the rule of their conduct in making appropriations for the circulation of the Scriptures *in all foreign tongues*.

1. *Resolved*, That in appropriating money for the translating, printing, or distributing, of the Sacred Scriptures in foreign languages, the Managers feel at liberty to



encourage only such versions *as conform in the principle of their translation to the common English version*; at least so far as that all the religious denominations represented in this Society, can consistently use and circulate said versions in their several schools and communities.

2. *Resolved*, That a copy of the above preamble and resolution be sent to each of the Missionary Boards accustomed to receive pecuniary grants from the Society, with a request that the same may be transmitted to their respective Mission stations, where the Scriptures are in process of translation; and also that the said several Mission Boards be informed that their application for aid must be accompanied with a declaration that the versions which they propose to circulate, are executed in accordance with the above resolution.

THOS. MACAULEY, *Chairman*.

JAMES MILNOR,            WM. H. VAN VLECK,

THOS. DEWITT,            FRANCIS HALL,

THOS. COCK.

## COUNTER REPORT.

The subscriber as a member of the Committee to whom was referred the application of Messrs. Pearce and Yates for aid in the circulation of the Bengalee New Testament, begs leave to submit the following considerations:

1. The Baptist Board of Foreign Missions have not been under the impression that the American Bible Society was organized upon the neutral principle that *Baptizo* and its cognates were never to be translated, but always transferred, in all versions of the Scriptures patronized by them. Had this principle been candidly stated

and uniformly acted upon by the Society in the appropriation of its funds for foreign distribution, the Baptists never could have been guilty of the folly or duplicity of soliciting aid for translations made by their missionaries.

2. As there is now a large balance in the treasury of the American Bible Society, *as many liberal bequests and donations have been made by Baptists*, and as these were made in the full confidence that the Society could constitutionally assist their own denomination, as well as the other evangelical denominations composing the National Institution, in giving the Bible to the heathen world; therefore,

*Resolved*, That \$        be appropriated and paid to the Baptist General Convention of the United States for Foreign Missions, to aid them in the work of supplying the perishing millions of the East with the Sacred Scriptures.

SPENCER H. CONE.

After debate, the further consideration of the subject was postponed to the next regular meeting of the Board.

Society's House, December 3, 1835.

The Board proceeded to consider the first resolution reported by the Committee; a motion to lay the resolution on the table having prevailed, the Hon. William Jay submitted resolutions proposing to give the subject to a new Committee. After a long and animated discussion, the whole subject was laid upon the table.

Society's House, February 4, 1836.

The Report of the Committee presented November 19, 1835, was taken up, and after debating the first resolu-

tion, the Board adjourned to February 17, 1836, at four o'clock, P. M.

Society's House, February 17, 1836.

The Board met pursuant to adjournment.

The Report of the Committee, submitted to the Board November 19, 1835, was again discussed at great length. Motions to lay it upon the table, to raise a new committee, and to postpone indefinitely, having been successively lost, THE REPORT WAS FINALLY PASSED BY A VOTE OF THIRTY TO FOURTEEN; and the Board adjourned.

## BIBLE TRANSLATION.

*A Brief Statement as to the Principles and Practice of the American Bible Society in relation to versions of the Scriptures patronized by it, together with a Reply to certain complaints against the course pursued. Published by the Managers.*

(1.) The Society above named was organized in 1816, by delegates of several denominations from various sections of the country. It was a novel spectacle to see so many ministers and laymen of different creeds uniting for a common religious object, and that so noble as the circulation of the revealed Word of God. The occasion was evidently one of uncommon satisfaction to all concerned. The Address of the Convention to the People of the United States (drawn up by the late Rev. Dr. John M. Mason) is replete with joyful expectation, and breathes throughout a spirit of fraternal concord and charity. "If," says the Address, "there be a single measure which can overrule objection, subdue opposition, and command exertion, this is the measure. That all our voices, all our affections, all our hands should be joined in the grand design of promoting peace on earth and good will to man—that they should resist the advance of misery, should carry the light of instruction into the dominions of ignorance, and the balm of joy to the soul of anguish, and all this by diffusing the oracles of God—addresses to the understanding an argument which cannot be encountered, and to the heart an appeal which its holiest emotions rise up to second."

“ Under such impressions, and with such views, fathers, brethren and fellow-citizens, the American Bible Society has been formed. Local feelings, party prejudices, sectarian jealousies are excluded by its very nature. Its members are leagued in that, and that alone, which calls up every hallowed, and puts down every unhallowed principle—the dissemination of the Scriptures in the received versions, where they exist, and in the most faithful where they may be required. In such a work, whatever is dignified, kind, venerable, true, has ample scope, while sectarian littleness and virulence can find no avenues of admission.” Such was the frank, impartial, catholic spirit which called this sacred Association into being.

(2.) In preparing the present statement in relation to versions, the Managers have not attempted to settle or touch any question as to philology or religious ordinances, but simply to inquire what was the design of those who founded the Institution as to the character of the Scriptures which were to be circulated? In obtaining the answer to this inquiry, they have the verbal opinions of some who were a part of the first Convention; they have the constitution then prepared, the address issued in connexion with it, and the uniform policy of the Board from the beginning down to the present time. From all these sources it appears as one of the clearest of truths in relation to the Society, that it was to have no sectarian character, and could perform no sectarian work. Whatever was to be done by it was evidently that, and that alone, which all could unite in doing.\* Whatever was denomi-

\* Is it the practice in ANY Society, where different denominations unite, to allow one part of the union to make sectarian books? How is it with the Sunday School or the Tract Society? Are any

national, however important in other circumstances, was here to be excluded. The Scriptures to be circulated were to be "without note or comment." These all the denominations brought together could unite in circulating, while they could never hope to agree as to the character of any explanatory appendages. Those distributed in the English tongue were to be of the "version in common use." This version all the members of the compact used and appealed to as authority. All, therefore, could unite in its distribution. The motive of this is apparent, namely, to perpetuate harmony, and while doing a great united work, to avoid the possibility of denominational collision. Thus far the wants of our own country are contemplated.

(3.) But the founders of the Society, after providing for these domestic wants, looked abroad to the destitute in other countries. They looked first to nominally Christian nations, such as France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece, Syria, &c., where they saw the great mass of the population without the Scriptures, yet possessing in their churches and among their priesthood ancient versions in their respective tongues, long since translated, many of them from the Latin vulgate. These ancient versions were held in high repute, while new versions would be viewed with suspicion and rejected. What was to be done in such circumstances by the founders in their attempts to extend their distributions? Their address to the public, already referred to, shows beyond doubt that this was a matter of distinct contemplation and provision by that venerable body. Distributions were in such cases to be made in the "received version." There was no

of their common funds used to make such books, at home or abroad, as only one sect can use? We believe no such privilege is asked or thought of.

hope that those old, venerated translations could at once be laid aside, and new ones introduced by foreigners. Nor could new ones be prepared until many years should pass away.

As these "received versions" even now can alone be circulated in those old Christian communities, as their defects are not numerous, (not more so, probably, than were those of the septuagint translation which the apostles used,) as they are of the same character as those which opened the eyes of Luther and other reformers, as they are still useful in papal countries, the present Managers, like their predecessors, have felt it their duty (the Apocrypha and all notes being excluded) to circulate them, fully assured that in so doing they carry out the well-studied designs of those who gave the Society its existence and marked out its course of action. They would, at the same time, add, that while fully authorized to circulate these versions, they would gladly exchange them for those of a more perfect character, and shall so exchange them as fast and as far as this is found practicable.

(4.) But the framers of the Society looked further still, to a third class of their fellow-men who were to be supplied with the Scriptures, namely, to the pagan nations. Here new versions were to be prepared, for none existed. But on what principles were they to be made? The address referred to, in treating of this class of versions which "may be required,"—which are yet to be made—modern versions, says that they must be "the most faithful." Now, what versions, in view of such a body, composed of six or eight denominations, can be viewed as "most faithful?" They are mainly to be prepared by protestant missionaries, whose patrons are a part of the Bible compact, and the churches to be gathered are to become, in a sense,

branches of churches here at home. Frequently the translations are made at the *sole* expense of the Bible Society. The terms "most faithful," in these circumstances obviously signify those versions which convey the *inspired meaning* of the originals, in view of those who support and direct the great Bible cause. But what is the inspired meaning in their view? Not that certainly which conveys the peculiar tenets of this or that denomination, while it misstates the views of others interested, and is in their judgment *unfaithful*. Faithful versions, in view of a Bible Association, must be such as all consider faithful—such as convey, in view of all, the true Divine meaning. In the English Bible adopted by the Society, the Divine meaning is thus conveyed. It is a faithful version, as all admit; and others should be equally faithful when put forth by those connected with this Association and solemnly bound by its pledges.

These are views and principles which the Managers have always understood as belonging to this Society. Nor were they aware that any of their fellow labourers could entertain different views until the year 1835. In the course of that year was an occurrence which has caused no little perplexity, and which will now be presented in detail.

(5.) In July, 1835, a letter was received, through a friend in Philadelphia, from the Rev. William H. Pearce, an English Baptist missionary at Bengal, in India. In this letter information was given that the writer, together with the Rev. Mr. Yates, a brother missionary, had prepared a new version of the Bengalee Scriptures, which they were desirous of having published. With Christian frankness it was stated that in this version they had translated the Greek terms *baptize* and *baptism* by words



which signify *immerse* and *immersion*, and that the Bible Society at Calcutta had, on this account, refused to patronize it. Had this letter contained nothing further, the Board could easily have dismissed the whole matter, as they had no responsibilities connected with that version. But it was further stated that this new Bengalee translation was made on the same principles as those which obtained in the Burmese translation, which it was understood the American Bible Society patronized. Here was a new and startling announcement. The Board had, indeed, granted, at different times, many thousand dollars towards the publication of this Burmese version, but without information from any quarter, or the least suspicion that it was of the character described by Mr. Pearce. They knew the Rev. Dr. Judson, the translator, to be a learned and pious man, and therefore felt a confidence that he had made what they considered a *faithful* version, *i. e.* one which conveyed the inspired meaning—the only point to which they thought of directing attention—presuming every friend of the Bible Society to be aware that its Board could not appropriate moneys for any version of a marked denominational character. On inquiring of the Rev. S. H. Cone, (one of the Standing Committee on Distribution,) who had repeatedly solicited funds for the Burmese version, whether that version was prepared as described by Mr. Pearce, *he for the first time informed* them that such was the fact. Although this letter from India had once been before the Committee on Distribution, the Board at its meeting in August referred it to the same again for further consideration. The Committee, after frequent meetings, were unable to recommend any course which would satisfy all concerned. In order to give this subject the most full and impartial investigation, the

Board now appointed a Special Committee of seven, a Presbyterian, an Episcopalian, a Baptist, a Methodist, a Moravian, one of the Reformed Dutch Church, and one from the Society of Friends. After repeated meetings of this Select Committee, and much inquiry, they brought in a Report with sundry Resolutions. The Rev. S. H. Cone, one of the number, also presented a minority Report. The whole subject was now postponed for a further and careful consideration. The Managers were not yet disposed to adopt the resolutions submitted, as they hoped, by a prudent delay, for the adjustment of the difficulty which had arisen, in a way satisfactory to all who were interested.

Before the next meeting of the Board, in September, several letters were received from Baptist clergymen, in whose judgment they had great regard, expressing the hope that no hasty measures would be adopted, and suggested some changes and additions in relation to the pending resolutions which they had seen in a Baptist paper.

These letters were laid before the Board, and the proposed changes were made. After frequent postponements and much deliberation, (more, probably, than they ever before bestowed on any one topic,) at a special meeting in February, 1836, they adopted the following preamble and resolutions which had been prepared, or modified, and approved of by *some* of the most intelligent worthy Baptist clergymen in America:

By the Constitution of the American Bible Society, its Managers are, in the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, restricted to such copies as are "without note or comment;" and in the English language, to the "version in common use." The design of these restrictions clearly seems to have been to simplify and mark out the duties of

the Society, so that all religious denominations of which it is composed might harmoniously unite in performing these duties.

As the Managers are now called to aid extensively in circulating the Sacred Scriptures in languages other than the English, they deem it their duty, in conformity with the obvious spirit of their compact, to adopt the following resolutions as the rule of their conduct in making appropriations for the circulation of the Scriptures in all *foreign tongues*.

*Resolved*, That in appropriating money for the translating, printing, or distributing the Sacred Scriptures in foreign languages, the Managers feel at liberty to encourage only such versions as conform in the principles of their translations to the common English version, at least so far as that all the religious denominations represented in this Society can consistently use and circulate said versions in their several schools and communities.

*Resolved*, That a copy of the above preamble and resolutions be sent to each of the missionary boards accustomed to receive pecuniary grants from this Society, with a request that the same may be transmitted to their respective mission stations where the Scriptures are in process of translation, and also that the said several missionary boards be informed that their applications for aid be accompanied with a declaration that the versions which they propose to circulate are executed in accordance with the above resolution.

(6.) Such was the course adopted by the Managers after more than six months of candid deliberation. No resolutions, it is believed, were ever adopted with a more conscientious conviction of duty, or with more kind feelings towards those who dissented. It was the aim in preparing

these rules to be impartial, to withhold patronage from all versions of a sectarian nature, and to encourage all which are faithfully translated, and yet in such a way that the different branches of the compact can unite in using them as they so cordially unite in using the English version.

The Managers have now stated what they believe to have been the purpose of the founders in relation to versions, and also what has been the intentional practice of those who have since conducted its affairs. They have furthermore given a concise history of their doings in regard to a denominational version in India which will satisfy most of those connected with the Society, that a just and constitutional course has been pursued, and that no other course could have been adopted, particularly in relation to the latter topic, without putting the very existence of the Society in jeopardy. But the Managers regret that notwithstanding the resolutions in question were prepared in their present shape, by wise, conscientious Baptists, who viewed and still view them as coincident with the constitution; notwithstanding they received the full sanction of the Society in May, 1836, and have been approved of by all the Auxiliaries, so far as known, they have yet failed to satisfy many of the Baptist denomination, and have called forth an amount of opposition not very common among the professed sons of peace. Charges in various forms have been made against the doings of the Board, some of which demand a brief reply.

*First.—The Managers are charged with having changed their policy, now objecting to and withholding aid from versions of such a character as they once patronized without hesitation.*

The reply of the Board here is, that they never, in a

single case, granted aid to a version which they knew at the time to be of such a character that only a part of their associates could consistently use it. Taking it for granted that none would ask them to aid denominational versions, they now find that in two instances they aided such, though in honest ignorance. It appears that a small edition of an Indian Gospel was once printed by them, where *baptizo* was translated by a word which signifies to *sprinkle*, or *pour*; and that one version in India had been aided where the same Greek word has been translated by a term signifying *immerse*. Had the peculiarity of these translations in either case been known at the time, they would by no means have been encouraged.

*Secondly.—The Managers are charged with partiality, by allowing other denominations to make such foreign versions as they choose, while Baptists have not this privilege.*

This charge can have no foundation, unless other denominations choose to make versions of such a character that all the members of the Bible Society can use them, while those who complain make such versions as their denomination alone can consistently use. The Managers can have no motive to partiality towards any of their associates, and are conscious of none, provided all lay aside denominational work, and adhere alike to the spirit and rules of this Association, when co-operating with it.

*Thirdly.—The Managers are charged with laying down rules in regard to versions which Baptist translators cannot conscientiously follow.*

The reply is, that the Managers lay down no rules

which they do not consider as enjoined on them by the conditions of their union, by the framers of the Society. If these rules bear with undue pressure on any portion of the compact, it is for those who appoint the Board, and who have control of the constitution, to alter that instrument so *that men of every creed and sentiment may prepare such foreign versions as they please, with the expectation that they will be published out of the common Bible fund!* At present such license would be deemed a violation of what the constitution requires. But the Board (while they would not judge for others) are unable to see why these rules, which the complainants themselves cheerfully observe in relation to the English, French, and other old versions, cannot be also followed in preparing new versions; that is, by domesticating in them the Greek word *baptizo* and *baptisma*, so that other missionaries can use them as well as Baptist.\* It cannot be affirmed that errors will be taught by these transferred words, nor can they be more unintelligible to the heathen than any other words which it is well known are transferred from the originals into the Bengalee and Burmese versions, and must be into all versions made in limited pagan tongues. Some of these words, it is true, must be explained by the dictionary, or the living teacher, before the common reader will understand them. So must many, very many words

\* The Rev. Joseph Hughes, a Baptist, and long a Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, had no scruple against transferring *baptizo*; nor has Rev. Mr. Sutton, now a missionary in India. Two able pamphlets, by Baptists in England, have just been published in favour of such a course. The Chippewa New Testament, prepared by Dr. James, a Baptist, and printed in 1833 at Albany, has the word *baptizo* transferred.

in the English Bible, and in every other, which the illiterate reader does not comprehend until instructed by some foreign aid? Where is there a modern tongue which does not abound in transferred words? The very name of most religious denominations is derived from the Greek.

*Fourthly.—The Managers are charged with the inconsistency of patronizing German and Dutch Bibles, where baptizo is translated by words which signify immerse, and yet withholding aid from the Bengalee and Burmese Bibles translated in the same way.*

The reply is, in the first place, that the former versions are *ancient* “received versions,” such as the founders of the Society promised to patronize. In the next place, those translated words alluded to, though they once signified immerse, have (like many words in the English Bible) lost their first meaning, and are now of as general import as the English word *Baptize*. They are versions which both Baptists and Pædo-baptists can and do use continually without objection. Should the versions referred to in India, as they are in the main good, undergo a similar change as to the import of a few words, so that different denominations can use them, the Managers will feel no scruple in granting them patronage. They will be viewed and treated as faithful versions when there is evidence that they convey to all the component parts of this Society, like the English and German Bibles, the mind of the Spirit. Let the Divine meaning be actually conveyed to the various readers, and it seems to the Board a matter of little moment whether this is effected through one tongue or another, or through a combination of several.

*Fifthly.*—Another charge is, that the Managers have set up the English Bible as a standard to which all translations must be conformed, thus abridging the liberty of the translator.

This is a mistake, as any reader of the foregoing resolutions will see. It is expected that missionaries, or others, who prepare new versions, will translate, as they do in fact, from the original tongues with great care, imitating the English no farther than by transferring a few words, which either cannot be translated or are of disputed meaning; and even these transfers are not required, provided the various members of the Society can unite in using the versions as they use the English. This certainly is imposing no severe restraint on the conscience of the translator, far less, it is apprehended, than the complainants (who have taken the English Bible, and appended to it a glossary, telling us *precisely* what certain Greek words signify) will require of their translators. How much liberty will the latter have to prepare versions which are not *thoroughly* denominational?

*Sixthly.*—Another grave charge is, that the American Bible Society has received a large amount of money from Baptists; particularly that it has received forty or fifty thousand dollars in the way of legacies, while it has made to the denomination, as such, but very partial appropriations, and now refuse to refund what is still due.

The reply here is, that while a part, perhaps a large part, of the denomination who aid the Bible cause in any form, have seceded from the American Bible Society and



formed one under denominational control, (its Managers being *necessarily* Baptists,) yet a highly respected and valuable portion are still coadjutors with the National Institution. More or less of the latter class are still found in the eastern, middle, southern and western states, co-operating with the local Auxiliaries. It would be improper, then, by returning Baptist funds, even if the alleged amount were correct, to treat the denomination as if it were no longer a part of the Bible compact. But the charge as to the amount is not correct. The aggregate of legacies received from Baptists, so far as known to the Board, is no more than \$18,000 ; namely, from the estate of John Fleetwood Marsh, deceased, of East Chester, New-York, \$10,000 ; from that of John Withington, of New-York, \$7,000 ; and from that of Josiah Penfield, of Georgia, \$1,000.

And how were these legacies expended ? The two first were received into the treasury in 1830, the latter in 1831, the very year when the Managers were endeavouring to supply the entire United States with the Bible, and which funds were wholly expended in that enterprise. Yes, they were *all* used in preparing and circulating English, German and French Bibles for the good of our own common country ; and a large debt remained after they were expended. No portion went to aid the missions of other denominations in preparing the Scriptures in any form. It cannot be asked, then, of course, that these funds should be paid back to the complainants.

It appears, on examining the Society's books, that while no more than \$18,000 have been received from Baptist legacies, and that these were all expended at home for a common object, the Baptist Foreign Mission Society has

since been furnished (that is, between the years 1831 and 1838) with no less than \$27,000 for the exclusive use of that denomination in preparing and circulating the Scriptures in France, Germany, Bengal and Burmah. In addition to these grants of money, the Managers have made numerous donations of English and other Scriptures for the exclusive use of Baptist missions. During the years 1838 and 1839 Messrs. Pasco and Love, Baptist missionaries in Greece, were furnished by the Society's agent in the Levant (and with great pleasure) with no less than 12,933 portions of the Scriptures, amounting in value to some \$5,000. It appears, then, that more than \$30,000, in money and books, have been furnished by the Board to aid Baptist missionaries in circulating the Scriptures, while little more than half of that sum has been received from Baptist legacies; and these were received under such circumstances as to pay no part of such grants.

But it is said that although the \$40,000 or \$50,000 of legacies spoken of as *furnished* to the Society may not as yet be actually paid over, still that sum will be paid from the residuum of the estate of Mr. Marsh, according to the provisions of his will. The American Bible Society, it is true, is one of the residuary legatees of said estate. How far there is a prospect of any speedy avails from this quarter will be seen after reading the following letter from the executor. This letter was procured in consequence of a statement in the Baptist Advocate in relation to this residuum, that "a simple legal process is alone necessary to transfer it to their (American Bible Society's) coffers—a process which the Board can at its own option pursue."

HACKENSACK, 18th December, 1840.

*Dear Sir,*—In reply to your letter of the 15th instant, respecting information of the present condition of the legacy left by the late Mr. Marsh, the Society, in addition to the legacy of \$10,000 which has been paid, are residuary legatees in common with the grand children and their children of the eight uncles of the testator, the Society to receive one-third—the aforesaid children the other two-thirds. These residuary legatees are very numerous, and scattered throughout England. We have ascertained about one hundred, and, from information received, there are at least as many more, whose names we have not been able to ascertain. Proceedings have been instituted in the Court of Chancery to have the estate settled, but from various causes it has not been brought to a close, and when it will be, it is impossible for me to say. I am advised that I cannot safely pay any of the residuary legatees without having them all brought, in some way, into court, so as to be bound by a decree, in order to a final settlement of the estate.

Very respectfully, yours, &c.,

JAMES HAGUE.

It is obvious that a long period must intervene before this residuum (if it *ever* comes) will reach the treasury. Should it ere long be received, it can with every propriety be employed as was the \$10,000 already realized from the same estate, in furnishing English, German, and French Bibles to the mixed population of our own country.

But it is contended, that in addition to the legacies in question, a large amount has been furnished by Baptists in the way of Life Directorships, Life Memberships, &c.

Some have placed the amount of payments of this kind at \$40,000 or \$50,000, equal to that of the legacies received and prospective.

Now, while the Managers are greatly averse to comparisons as to the contributions of different denominations, they have been led, by the repeated *charges* referred to, to examine with some care as to their accuracy. They find, in the first place, in relation to Life Directors, that out of a list of more than 400 belonging to the Society, only 13 were of the Baptist denomination. Of these thirteen, two were constituted Directors on account of having been members of the Convention which formed the Society. Four others were made Directors in consequence of having been executors where legacies were left it. Two others were made Directors by contributions furnished by men of other denominations, and one of the remainder is still a friend of the American Bible Society. It does not appear, then, that there are, in any view of the matter, more than the value of four Directorships to be returned.

In relation to Life Members, it is not easy to determine the precise number belonging to the Baptist persuasion. In looking over a list of more than 4,000 names, not more than about 100 can be thus identified, while several of these were constituted members by those of other creeds, and several more are still friendly to the Society. But allowing there were 150 Life members, each of which has contributed \$30, the total would amount to no more than \$4,500, to be added to the \$600 for Life Directorships.

The Board have next looked over the names of the 120 citizens in New-York who aided the erection of the Society's House, at an expense of more than 22,000 dollars. While they find subscriptions from almost every other denomination, they find but one (Dr. Luke Barker's) be-

longing to that from which these charges now come. This contribution was \$30, to be added to the \$5,100 above named.

They look then at donations made specifically to aid distributions in Burmah. Presuming these to have been made by Baptists, they find them to amount in all to less than \$1,000. As to contributions made through Auxiliaries, there are no means for determining definitely what amount has been thus received. From the large Auxiliaries in New-England, New-York, and a few at the South, whence most of the free donations come, it is clear to the Board, from inquiries and statements of agents, that a small amount, *comparatively*, (as in the case of Life Directorships, Memberships, and the Building Fund,) has ever been furnished by the Baptists—particularly by those who have seceded.\*

In the newly settled states, those of that denomination have often united with others in procuring and distributing Bibles in their respective counties. But here the value was returned in books, and in many instances large gratuitous supplies in addition. Not a few of their number continue still to aid in these domestic distributions, both to the gratification of the Auxiliaries and the Parent Society. Funds thus paid in for books, however, add nothing to the capital of the Institution, and can furnish no ground for a demand on those which come as free donations. While, then, it cannot be determined with minute accuracy what amount of money has been furnished by Baptists gratuitously, or so that it can be used by other deno-

\* Let any one inquire of the large Societies what portion of their free contribution ever came from Baptists who are not still with them.

minations, the Board have no belief that it can surpass or equal the more than \$30,000 which they as a sect have received from the Institution. Aside from the \$18,000 of legacies, (used at home and not to be counted,) there is no evidence of their having contributed to the treasury *one half* the amount which they have received from it. Under such circumstances, the Managers cannot, of course, feel the obligation of making *further returns* to those who have chosen to leave the Society, and to assert in so many ways its wrong doings.

## AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY.

“Such reasoning falls, like an inverted cone,  
Wanting its proper base to stand upon.”

THE foregoing document was published anonymously sometime in the early part of February of the present year. It was republished in the “Extracts from Correspondence” of the American Bible Society for March, and acknowledged as issued by the authority of the Board. It has thus become the duly accredited publication of an honoured institution, and both in that character and on other important accounts, is to be regarded as deserving a careful perusal and a most critical examination. This is the first public attempt of the American Board to vindicate their conduct towards the Baptist denomination. Their annual reports have alluded in such guarded terms to the points at issue, as left those who had no other means of intelligence in a state of extreme doubt, if not of total ignorance, even of what had been done, aside from the arguments in favour of the acts of the Board.

Mr. Brigham’s letter was a private affair, and was never acknowledged as official. Four years were permitted to glide away before the Board were prepared to justify a course of conduct which has separated from connexion with them more than half a million of communicants, with adherents numbering several millions. Under such circumstances, the document preceding must be regarded as exhibiting the calm, well weighed, and perma-

nently decided opinions of men, who have not needed time for deliberation, or opportunity for acquiring information.

To treat such a document with disrespect—to answer argument with ridicule, or statements of fact with conjecture and surmise, is as far removed from our duty as a Christian, as it would be opposed to the character which we have ever endeavoured to maintain as the conductor of a respectable public journal. Before entering upon the examination, we wish to state one or two principles which shall guide us.

If we should be under the necessity of disproving a statement of fact, we wish not to be understood to imply that the Board meant to deceive. If we attempt to refute an argument, we attribute no evil purpose to those who have advanced it. Should we ever employ the legitimate mode of reasoning, called by the schools *reductio ad absurdum*, we here, once for all, abjure every intention to cast ridicule upon the American Bible Society, and declare our purpose merely to expose the weakness of the weapons which it has employed in its defence.

We have, for convenience of reference, numbered certain sections, and shall discuss them in the order in which they appear.

1. The first is a narrative of historical fact, and deserves to be read and pondered with deep attention. The extract from the Address of the Convention which it contains, is justly entitled to the encomium bestowed upon it, as all must admit that it breathes a “frank, impartial, catholic spirit.” In order to connect this history with the proceedings regarding our denomination, a few additional particulars are necessary. These we will endeavour to supply.



The Baptist Missions were commenced in 1793, and the translation of βαπτίζω and its cognates immediately followed. The British and Foreign Bible Society was founded in 1804, and the Calcutta Auxiliary was organized in 1807. The Baptist missionaries were *invited* to co-operate, and their versions of the Scriptures, *with βαπτίζω and its cognates translated*, were taken under the patronage of the Auxiliary and of the Parent Institution. The latter aided the versions without the intimation of any objection.

In 1813 its Corresponding Secretary addressed an official letter to the Corresponding Secretary of the English Baptist Missionary Society, to inquire whether βαπτίζω and its cognates were transferred or translated. The official reply was *that they were translated*.<sup>\*</sup> No action was taken thereupon by the British and Foreign Bible Society, but it continued to aid the Baptist translations. Under these circumstances, the American Bible Society was formed in 1816, and Baptists were invited to co-operate with the assurance that its only object was, “the dissemination of the Scriptures in the received versions where they exist, and in the most faithful where they may be required.” Some of the Baptist versions had been in existence *sixteen years*, and many thousand copies had been received by the benighted heathen. These versions had received aid from the British and Foreign Bible Society with the full knowledge that βαπτίζω and its cognates were translated. These facts were matters of public record, and although now in 1841, a Board of Managers may

<sup>\*</sup> Hinton's Letter to Lord Bexley, President of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

declare, that *they did not know them*, it will require more than their conjecture to convince posterity that a man of such intelligence as the Rev. Dr. John M. Mason, who drew up the Address of the Convention, was equally *ignorant*. The question is not what Mr. Brigham and his co-managers in 1839 or in 1841 knew. Suppose that *they* should declare themselves ignorant that there were any Baptists in the world, that there were any Baptist missions in India, or even that there was such an institution as the British and Foreign Bible Society which assisted the Baptist translations. We appeal to any court of law, or of equity, or to any man of plain, unsophisticated sense, what would be the effect of such a plea of ignorance? Would it affect the facts of the case, or alter in the least the position of the Baptists, and their relation to other denominations in forming the American Bible Society? Or would the plea recoil against a body of men, who were intrusted with the interests of such an institution, and when their professions and actions had led into error a large denomination of Christians, excuse themselves *on account of their ignorance of recorded and well known facts*? This point is one of great importance, and will be examined at length when we come to the fifth section. We will there endeavour to show the means of acquiring the requisite information possessed by the Board of Managers.

We will not then detract from the reputation of the intelligent and noble-minded men, who, with Dr. Mason at their head, prepared and published the Address of the Convention, by believing them ignorant of the proceedings of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and of the history of the Baptist translations in India. But supposing them so culpably ignorant, still their professions were perfectly "frank, impartial and catholic." They supposed

that in the work which they commenced, "sectarian littleness and virulence" could "find no avenue of admission." It will be our business to ascertain how unflinchingly their successors have maintained these sentiments.

2. The first sentence of the second section cannot properly be considered by itself. It has a most intimate connexion with two or three sentences in a subsequent section. We will place them in juxtaposition.

In preparing the present statement in relation to versions, the Managers have not attempted to settle or touch any question as to philology or religious ordinances, but simply to inquire what was the design of those who founded the Institution, as to the character of the Scriptures which were to be circulated?

The terms "most faithful," in these circumstances obviously signify those versions which convey the *inspired meaning* of the originals, in view of those who support and direct the great Bible cause. But what is the inspired meaning in their view? Not that certainly which conveys the peculiar tenets of this or that denomination, while it misstates the views of others interested, and is in their judgment *unfaithful*.—Faithful versions, in view of a Bible Association, must be such as all consider faithful—such as convey, in view of all, the true Divine meaning. In the English Bible adopted by the Society, the Divine meaning is thus conveyed. It is a faithful version, as all admit; and others should be equally faithful when put forth by those connected with this Association and solemnly bound by its pledges.

The Managers "have not attempted to settle or touch any question as to philology or religious ordinances," and yet decide that the Baptist translations are "in their judgment unfaithful."

The discrepancies between deciding that the translation of βαπτίζω is *unfaithful*, and not settling any question as to philology; between determining that immersion is wrong and not touching any question as to religious ordinances; are too glaring to escape the observation of any reader. The full consideration of these extracts would lead us directly to the true issue between the American Bible Society and the Baptists. This we prefer to postpone till we reach the section from which the second extract was made. The remainder of the present section is designed to show that the Society were bound to avoid every thing sectarian in its aspect. This we most readily and heartily admit, and our object under the "true issue" will be to show that their course has been sectarian, since they adopted the resolutions of 1836. Previously to that occurrence we acquit them, so far as the present question is concerned, of any such charge.

3. The third section relates to the ancient versions of the Scriptures in Europe founded on the Latin Vulgate. These the Managers acknowledge that they have patronized from their commencement of the work of foreign distribution. They justify this procedure on the ground that the "defects" of these versions "were not numerous, and there was no hope that those old, venerated versions could at once be laid aside, and new ones be introduced by foreigners. Nor could new ones be prepared until many years should pass away."

With the propriety of this course we are not at present concerned. As an individual, we approve it, although we

know that in this we differ from many excellent men, and we do not form our opinion altogether upon the reasons advanced by the Managers of the American Bible Society. But we would have been better pleased had the Managers alluded more distinctly and more accurately to the *character* of the *defects* of which they speak. The Spanish Bible, for instance, employs "Hacer penitencia" to express the meaning of those passages in which repentance is enjoined. The words signify "to do penance," and are so understood by Spaniards themselves. When they wish to express our idea of "repent," they use the verb "arrepentirse." So commonly is the idea of doing penance attached to "hacer penitencia," that they employ the phrase when they invite a friend to dine with them, and to submit to meagre diet: "Come and do penance with me to day," that is, "Do not expect rich fare, but be content with whatever we happen to have." Similar *defects* exist in other versions founded on the Latin Vulgate, and *therefore* the Papal See permits them to be used, while it is mortally opposed to Protestant versions of the Holy Scriptures.

When Baptists were in 1816 invited to co-operate in forming the American Bible Society, with the assurance that it would aid "in the dissemination of received versions where they do exist," theirs had existed and had been extensively received by heathen, and approved by Christians generally, for a considerable number of years. With some of them *no other version did exist to compete*. The American Bible Society began to extend its benefactions to foreign versions, and commenced with those founded on the Vulgate. Could Baptists suppose that the most bigoted Pædo-baptist would find in the translation of βαπτίζω a greater *defect* than those acknowledged to exist

in the Romanist versions? But, say the Managers, "There was no hope that those old, venerated translations could at once be laid aside, and new ones be introduced by foreigners. Nor could one be prepared till many years had passed away." And did the Board then suppose that *the Baptists would lay aside their versions and adopt those prepared by Pædo-baptists?* And did they suppose that "new ones could be prepared" before "many years should pass away?" Either supposition indicates far less intelligence and less judgment than we are ready to accord to the Managers of the American Bible Society. But "the Managers [FIRST RESOLUTION] feel at liberty to encourage only such versions as conform to the common English version, at least so far that all the religious denominations represented in this Society can consistently use and circulate said versions in their several schools and communities."

Connecting this resolution with the history of the Romanist versions, and with the fact that the Baptist versions are excluded under this resolution because they translate βαπτίζω, it becomes an indisputable fact that the Managers can "use and circulate" Romanist versions in preference to Baptist, can sanction the "doing of penance," for repentance, rather than allow a conscientious body of Christians, who in no other respects differ from them in translating Scripture, to translate the word βαπτίζω and its cognates.

To obtain a complete view of the case in this light, it will be necessary to add, that the Baptists were large contributors to the funds of the American Bible Society, and zealous co-operators in its cause: that Romanists had no connexion with it: that the agents of the American Bible Society, when travelling through the country,

preaching and lecturing in behalf of foreign distribution, frequently referred to Carey, and Judson and Yates, and others of our translators, and wrought upon the sympathies of their audiences by the necessity of assisting such men in such undertakings. These, with other circumstances which we will hereafter develop, will conduce to show the true position of the Board in relation to foreign versions.

The Managers have softened the character of the Popish superstitions and will-worship inculcated in the Romanist versions, by calling them "defects." We have mentioned one of these *defects* that prevail throughout them. Our readers will perhaps be gratified to see another to enable them to judge of the meaning of the word *defect*, when applied to a translation of Holy Scripture, and also to understand what the Managers of the American Bible Society believe "all the religious denominations represented in this Society can consistently use and circulate in their several schools and communities," while they recoil with horror from the idea that a version which translates βαπτίζω should be circulated, though in every other respect, even to them, unexceptionable. In the same Spanish version of which we spoke, printed and circulated by the American Bible Society, the twenty-first verse of the eleventh chapter of Hebrews reads thus: .

POR FE JACOB, ESTANDO PARA MORIR, RENDIJO A CADA UNO DE LOS HIJOS DE JOSEPH: Y ADORO LA ALTURA DE SU VARA.

"By faith, Jacob being about to die, blessed each one of the sons of Joseph: *and worshipped the top of his staff.*"

The worship of an image on the top of a staff, which is the idea that a common Romanist attaches to such a

passage, is a venial fault, a mere *defect* in the view of this circular; but the immersion of a believer in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, according to the example of Christ and his apostles, is an unpardonable crime, and the version of Scripture that inculcates it, *is unfaithful*.

Before leaving the third section we must express our regret that the Managers have not been more particular in this to date their transactions. This defect we shall endeavour to supply.

From the circular alone, the most of readers would draw the inferences, that the Society laboured for some time in the distribution of the English Scriptures before they turned their attention to existing versions in foreign tongues, and that at a more distant period they considered the question of assisting in translating into heathen languages. We do not say that it was designed to convey erroneous ideas in these matters, but we assert that the circular would not give the impression that, as was really the case, *in the very first year of the Society's operations*, the Managers who then had charge of its interests, "directed their attention to the translation of the Scriptures into the Indian languages of our country, and the publication of the Spanish New Testament, and of the Scriptures in the French." First Report, page 18. The next year we find them ordering an edition of the Bible in the language of the Delaware Indians, and another in that of the Mohawks. Second Report, pages 13 and 19. From that time to the present they have been engaged in the distribution of foreign versions and the encouragement of new translations, so that from the commencement of their operations, either their principles in relation to such matters were established, or they were proceeding in affairs of the utmost importance, and zeal-



ously employing the aid of our denomination, without fixed principles. This matter of dates we mention now because particularly connected with the second and third sections, but the application of the argument derived from them will be felt most forcibly under the fifth.

4. The substance of the fourth section is, that *where versions did not exist, but were to be made, the most faithful were to be patronized*, and that a version which expressed views in which all the denominations represented in the Society did not coincide, is therefore in the judgment of its Managers *unfaithful*.

Should these statements be admitted, they do not apply to the case of the Bengali version. Although since improved by Yates, *it existed many years before the American Bible Society, and has undergone no change in the particular objected to*. It was therefore not a version about to be made. We should think that a judicious body of men like the Managers of the American Bible Society would see this discrepancy in their argument. But leaving this, we discover other important points deserving of notice in these statements.

In the first place, *the Managers have never before charged that the Bengali version is unfaithful*. A resolution to that effect was once started in committee, but the Rev. Dr. De Witt most solemnly abjured the idea of expressing such an opinion, and the resolution was withdrawn.

In the Board, the Baptist Managers frequently challenged any assertion of *unfaithfulness*, but that point was *never made the subject of debate*. Now, when the Baptists have left the Society, when they have formed another Institution, and have continued their separate organization for four years; when there is no one to vindicate their

cause in the Board of the American Bible Society, or to expose the inconsistency of such a procedure, the Managers gravely conclude that they did not patronize the Bengali version *because it was unfaithful!*

We will acknowledge that there is a boldness about this plea, which, had it been assumed in an earlier part of the controversy, would have implied to many minds a greater degree of consistency than any before advanced. A version is *unfaithful*, because it expresses views contrary to those entertained by a portion of the Society. It must be evident that the question of numbers in such a matter cannot be considered. If the principle be correct, it would have been equally applicable, had the Baptists constituted the larger, and the Pædo-baptists the smaller portion of the Society. Let us apply the principle and see how it will work. A portion of the Society belong to the Old School in doctrine, and another to the New School. The missionaries are similarly divided. Some are regarded by those who differ from them as Pelagian, and others as Antinomian. Of course each translates certain disputed passages of Scripture bearing upon doctrine according to his peculiar views of their meaning, and in these *expresses views differing from those of many others equally interested in the Society*. Will the Managers therefore deem such translations *unfaithful*? If the principle be correct, surely men of honourable minds will not think of restricting its application to Baptists.

The latter portion of this section thus proceeds:

“Faithful versions in view of a Bible Association, must be such as all consider faithful—such as convey, in view of all, the true Divine meaning. In the English Bible adopted by the Society, the Divine meaning is thus conveyed. It is a faithful version, as all admit; and others

should be equally faithful when put forth by those connected with this Association and solemnly bound by its pledges."

In order fully to understand the meaning of these sentences, it must be borne in mind, that the Bengali version was rejected, because in a single word and its cognates, it did not conform to the English version; in other respects its faithfulness is not disputed. The Board of Managers "have not attempted to settle or touch any question as to philology," and yet decide that if a conscientious philologist translates a word which is *not* translated in the English version, his whole book, though unexceptionable in every other particular, is *unfaithful*, and cannot be patronized. Thus the English version is made a Procrustean bed, to the length and breadth of which the conscience of every translator must be stretched or contracted as the case may require.

"It is a faithful version, as all admit." Gratuitous assumption is not argument or matter of fact. *We* do not admit it to be faithful in the sense which the Managers imply by their reasoning. Nay, we doubt whether in this sense, one in ten thousand of our countrymen, exclusive of Episcopalians, will venture, upon deliberation, to declare it faithful. We will adduce one instance. In Acts xii. 4, the Greek word Πασχα is translated, contrary to all rules of philology, "Easter." No scholar doubts that it should be, as everywhere else in the Testament, translated "Passover." Do the Board of Managers mean to insist, that the English version is faithful in respect to this word? Yet if it be not, what becomes of their argument? It will not do for them to say, that they meant not to assert its faithfulness in every single word. The Bengali version is not charged with unfaithfulness, except in one word and

its cognates. Nay, the testimonials to its faithfulness are of the most indisputable character, and many of them from Pædo-baptists. They have never been disputed by the Board, and therefore it would only encumber our argument here to introduce them. The only fault ever found with the version, is that it has followed the version of Martin Luther, and almost every other Protestant version of inland Europe and all the ancient Eastern versions, in translating βαπτίζω, instead of transferring it. This is the true issue, and to this we shall hereafter lend our attention more closely. At present we cannot pass by a question or two suggested by what we have said. The word "EASTER"—do our Presbyterian and Congregational friends preserve it in *their versions*, or do they dare to translate, Πασχα "Passover," or by a word of similar import? This is an important question. Have our Episcopal friends given it due consideration? Dr. Milnor was exceedingly strenuous against the *Baptists*, because they varied in one word from the English version. Is he equally scrupulous, we will not say, conscientious, towards his Presbyterian friends? Shall we question our Congregational friends about the word "bishop?" We wish not to annoy, we desire only to convince. If the Managers will proceed to apply their reasoning, they cannot fail to discover its fallaciousness.

Since, in their opinion, faithfulness requires that *every word*, in the translation of which denominations differ, should be conformed to the English version, they certainly decide that in these words the English Bible is faithful. They cannot, therefore, avoid the conclusion that "Easter," and "Bishop," and similar words, are faithful translations, and that every version which does not copy them, is unfaithful and undeserving of patronage. On this subject,

then, we appeal to them as honest, impartial men, and ask them whether they have made due inquiries in these respects regarding the versions which they patronize. If they have not, do their consciences acquit them?

The Episcopal denomination seldom object to immersion. In the English Church it is specially prescribed, and in this country it is sometimes practised by them. Last year a writer in the *Churchman* spoke in favour of it, and denounced *sprinkling* as unscriptural. Bishop Smith of Kentucky, declares immersion to be the only Scriptural mode of baptism. The British Critic, the Church organ in Great Britain, regards it in the same light, and wishes to see it restored as the universal practice of the Church. But the Episcopalians all reverence "Easter," and prefer the term "Bishop" to "Overseer." They have not, it is true, a *majority* in the Board of Managers, but if they had, would other denominations submit to have every version stigmatized as *unfaithful*, which in these and similar words does not conform to the English? Surely the Managers will not pretend that numbers decide principle: in other words, that only that is faithful for which a majority of votes can be procured.

This subject still presents itself in another aspect. If the English version convey "the true Divine meaning," and if it be "faithful," have the Managers any right to *alter* it? So much praise has been of late bestowed upon the English version, especially since the American Bible Society has adopted it as the standard by which to determine the faithfulness of other versions, that the patrons of that Institution are probably little prepared to learn what liberties its Managers are taking with that which conveys "tho true Divine meaning." We might point them to several *thousand* instances in which they have varied from

the authorized editions of the English Scriptures, but we prefer showing how they disagree even with themselves. The length of this article will permit us to adduce only one instance, but it shall be one of no little importance. We have before us four editions of the American Bible Society, two of the same year. In the octavo edition of the Bible for 1829, John x. 28, 29, is thus translated :

“AND I GIVE UNTO THEM ETERNAL LIFE ; AND THEY SHALL NEVER PERISH, NEITHER SHALL ANY *man* PLUCK THEM OUT OF MY HAND.

“MY FATHER WHICH GAVE *them* ME, IS GREATER THAN ALL ; AND NO *man* IS ABLE TO PLUCK *them* OUT OF MY FATHER’S HAND.”

The duodecimo edition of the same year, gives the passage thus :

“AND I GIVE UNTO THEM ETERNAL LIFE ; AND THEY SHALL NEVER PERISH, NEITHER SHALL ANY PLUCK THEM OUT OF MY HAND.

“MY FATHER, WHICH GAVE *them* ME, IS GREATER THAN ALL ; AND NONE IS ABLE TO PLUCK *them* OUT OF MY FATHER’S HAND.”

The octavo edition of the New Testament for 1831, is altered from the octavo edition of the Bible for 1829, and follows the duodecimo edition of the latter year.

But the octavo edition of 1839 varies from both, and presents the passage thus, placing the word “man” in roman characters, *as though it were in the original.*

“AND I GIVE UNTO THEM ETERNAL LIFE ; AND THEY SHALL NEVER PERISH, NEITHER SHALL ANY MAN PLUCK THEM OUT OF MY HAND.

“MY FATHER, WHICH GAVE *them* ME, IS GREATER THAN ALL ; AND NO MAN IS ABLE TO PLUCK *them* OUT OF MY FATHER’S HAND.”

Such then is the mode in which the Managers treat a version which they believe to convey "the true Divine meaning," and to be "faithful" even to individual words. To some readers, the verses which we have quoted, convey different meanings as they have been varied by the Managers. A man who cherished warmly the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, might allege, that when "man" is inserted as though in the original, it leaves a doubt whether *other* beings might not pluck the saints from the Father's hand. But this is not the question with us. Our inquiry is, where is the consistency of thus varying a version, and then insisting that it conveys "the true Divine meaning," and cashiering every version that does not conform to it?

We shall here endeavour to show the *real* issue between the American Bible Society and the Baptists. We say the *real* issue, for we have already shown that the unfortunate course of the American Bible Society has involved them in several collateral issues, upon each of which a simple statement of facts furnishes an unquestionable verdict against them. In order to come at the real issue, we must suppose *all* these facts to be changed. We will then imagine that the Bengali version was *not* in existence when the British and Foreign Bible Society commenced; that it was *not* patronized by that Institution; that the Secretary of that Institution was *not* officially required to interrogate the Baptist Missionary Society in 1813, whether in that version βαπτίζω was translated; that the Missionary Society did *not* reply that it was; that the British and Foreign Bible Society did *not* continue to patronize the version; that the American Bible Society, when it was formed in 1816, did *not* know of the existence of that version; that this Society did *not* commence patron-

izing foreign versions in the first years of its existence ; that it does *not* patronize Catholic versions, inculcating *the doing of penance* and the *worshipping of the top of a staff*; that it does *not* change the English version in thousands of instances and sometimes in very important cases. These and many other circumstances must be imagined to be *changed*, before we can fairly try the *real* issue, the point, which, though concealed by many other matters less important, is the true point of difference between the American Bible Society and the Baptists.

We suppose, then, that the Bengali version was about to be prepared, and the Managers of the American Bible Society were about to determine the principles on which they would commence the patronage of new versions. We will suppose further, that other versions were being prepared in the same language, and that the latter transferred βαπτίζω, while the Baptist version *translated* the word. The question then comes legitimately before the Managers, which is the more faithful course in making a version of the Holy Scriptures into a heathen language, to *transfer* βαπτίζω or to *translate* it. The Managers assume the position that it is more faithful to transfer the word ; the Baptists believe that it is more faithful to translate it.

It will be evident upon a little consideration, that the question of the English version is not necessarily connected with this issue. This version has been in existence about two hundred years. It is generally used and is esteemed classic in the vernacular tongue. Ideas more or less definite are attached to the word “ baptize,” which has been transferred in it from the Greek. The facilities furnished in this country for the study of the original, and the general and rapidly increasing diffusion of knowledge, diminish, to



say the least, the necessity of translating the word. But with a heathen nation the case is different.

A missionary of the cross, imbued with love to God and man, has visited a foreign land to communicate the will of Heaven to the ignorant. He bears with him the precious oracles which reveal that will, and he makes himself acquainted with the language of the people whom he desires to benefit. He then commences the work of translation. A word occurs which expresses a distinct duty. Of the meaning of that word, or the import of that duty, he has no doubt. To enjoin that among other duties, he has left his home and devoted his life to hardship and peril. The Scripture which he is translating, will be scattered among millions of the human race, many of whom may never see a missionary of the cross. None of the natives of the country possess the originals, nor could any of them read or understand them if possessed. If he transfers the word, no native can understand its meaning without personal instruction; if he translates it, the duty enjoined becomes perfectly intelligible.\* There is, it is true, in his own land a diversity of practice, and some variety of views, regarding the duty and the word which enjoins it. But the leading reformers translated it; the greater part of the languages of Europe, and the ancient versions in the Asiatic tongues have it translated. With regard to many other parts of Scripture, in his own native land, there is great

\* Both in India and Burmah, many conversions have taken place from the reading of the Scriptures; and the first intelligence of such facts has sometimes been communicated to our missionaries by the application for baptism on the part of natives who had come from a distance and introduced themselves for that special purpose. Had the command to be baptized been concealed in an unknown tongue, what obligation would it have imposed?

diversity of views. Contests concerning them at times run so high, that the terms Pelagian, Antinomian, and even heretic, are freely bandied about among the parties who attach different meanings to different passages. Yet he has not transferred these. He has conscientiously, in the fear of God, expressed what he believes to be, the meaning of the inspired volume. He again examines the word with the most scrupulous and prayerful anxiety, and finding not the least reason to doubt its meaning, he *translates* it.

Another missionary is similarly situated, but his deliberations come to a similar result. A society offers him five or ten thousand dollars, as the case may be, to be expended in publishing his translation, if he will transfer, rather than translate the word concerned. He has no more doubt than the other of its meaning. He sees that to transfer it, would be to conceal that meaning from the heathen. He feels that he stands between God and the soul of each native who reads his book, and that he is professing to communicate to the latter, to the best of his ability, *the whole revealed will of heaven*. If he translates the word, and communicates the will of God in this matter, the money will not be given; if he transfers the word, and conceals that will, the boon will be forthcoming. It has been already voted *on that express condition*.<sup>\*</sup> His brother

<sup>\*</sup> At the annual meeting of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, in Hartford, April 27th, 1836, a letter was presented from Rev. John C. Brigham, Corresponding Secretary of the American Bible Society, notifying the Board that, "on the 17th instant, at a meeting of the Managers, the sum of five thousand dollars was appropriated to the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, to promote the circulation of the Scriptures in foreign tongues," which money

missionary has had the same proposition before him, but has thrown himself upon the protection of the Author of the book, and thus communicated the will of the Author. The second missionary remembers that the word in question contains an express command of his beloved Lord. He reflects upon all that his Lord did and suffered for him, and considers that he is now communicating the will of Jehovah Jesus to fallen, sinful man. He trembles under the terrible threat accompanying the Apocalypse, "if any man shall add," or, "if any man shall take away from the words of the prophecy of this book;" and he fully believes that what is applicable to a portion of the will of God, because it is from God, must be in some sense applicable to the whole. He sees that purposely to conceal a part from the heathen, while professing to give them the whole, is almost identical with taking away

would be paid over, if our foreign versions were conformed "in the principles of their translation to the common English version, &c.," on which condition the appropriation had been made. The grant was conscientiously declined. Similar attempts were made by the British and Foreign Bible Society to procure the transfer of the words in the Bengali version. The manner in which the English Baptist missionaries reason upon the subject, evinces the deep anxiety and perplexity to which propositions of this kind subjected them. On the one hand was pressing pecuniary necessity; on the other, the utmost facility for the publication and circulation of their translations: but with the former was the fear of God; with the latter, the patronage of man.

We do not mean to intimate that the Managers of the American Bible Society designed to bribe or tempt the Baptists from their integrity. They acted consistently with the erroneous policy which they adopted in 1836, and have since continued. But had the Baptists yielded, and transferred the words in question under such circumstances, could the Managers of the American Bible Society have regarded the Baptist versions as *faithful*?

a part. He feels deeply upon the subject, but the will of the Society is imperious. The five thousand dollars are needed for the publication of the book. He yields and *transfers* the word.

In all this comparison, we have not started the question whether the first or the second missionary is a Baptist or a Pædo-baptist. The only question to be kept in view in the comparison, is, whether it is dealing *faithfully* with God's word, when making a version in a foreign tongue, to *transfer* an important part, which a conscientious missionary believes himself capable of *translating*.

The board of Managers are now to consider which of these two versions is the most faithful. The one has, in the fear of God, communicated the truth according to the conscientious convictions of the translator; the other has, from the fear of man, concealed a portion of that truth. Which is the more faithful version of the two? We leave each manager to decide this question between himself and his God.

Still we are apprehensive that the Managers do not duly consider the difference between a version in the language of an intelligent, literary people like ours, and one among a comparatively ignorant and heathen nation. Here we abound with living teachers as well as written comments on every thing which might otherwise be obscure in the text of the Scriptures. But to make the case of the heathen our own; we may fancy a being from another planet, who has brought us the oracles of God in his own language, and translated them into ours. Should he leave in his vernacular tongue the words directing us what to do when we believed, when he had been sent to communicate to us *the whole truth*, what would we judge of the *faithfulness* of his translation? And should another, sent

on a similar errand, to the best of his ability, in the fear God, translate the whole, who would doubt which version was the more faithful of the two ?

We may here observe that in our opinion the Managers have acted decidedly wrong in arguing upon this as a mere denominational question. Previously to the action of the Bible Societies upon the subject, more Pædo-baptist versions translated the word βαπτίζω, than transferred it, and nearly all these versions gave it the same meaning expressed in the Baptist versions.\* Among those, also, who use the English version, a large number of Pædo-baptist scholars of great note, have given their sanction to the same meaning. It is, therefore, not in accordance with the discretion and modesty which should characterize a Board of Managers, to assume as a fact, that, because many Pædo-baptists sprinkle or pour, all other denominations than ours are unable to use our versions. The managers, in a part of the circular which we shall hereafter examine, admit that in the German and Dutch Bibles, the word in question is translated, and the translated word *once* meant to immerse. This *once* must be referred to the times of Luther, who, as well as other contemporaneous scholars, expressly declares it. The Managers have thus placed themselves in a perplexing dilemma. Either the whole of inland Europe must have immersed at the time when these versions came into general use, or the versions must have been used by those who sprinkled or poured. If the latter be admitted, the argument that other denominations cannot use the Baptist versions, falls to the ground. If the former horn of the dilemma be adopted, then at the time of the reformation, all the reformed churches of inland

\* Look at Appendix.

Europe immersed, and the rite has since been changed to sprinkling or pouring, and all the various vernacular words in the different languages, having reference to it, have, within four hundred years, lost their meaning.

We are Baptist, both in sentiment and practice, but we never desire to claim as authority for our views, more than the strict truth of history will yield us. If the Managers of the American Bible Society can prove that *all* who used the German, the Dutch and the Danish versions, at the time of their publication, that is, at and subsequent to the reformation, invariably practised immersion, it may, perhaps, have a beneficial effect upon the minds of Pædobaptists, to publish the proof. Still it would be difficult to explain how, under such circumstances, all the words relating to the subject have now lost their meaning. If such a change of meaning were possible, it could not, by any possibility, have been instantaneous, and it must have followed in consequence of a change of the rite. But when the rite was changed in any instance, either the change in the meaning of the words took place instantaneously, or those who practised sprinkling or pouring, used Bibles in which the translated words concerning baptism “signified immerse.” The former of the last two propositions, no reasonable man will maintain; the latter totally overthrows the argument of the Managers of the American Bible Society.

5. It must have been remarked that we have carefully abstained from the imputation of any dishonourable motive to the Managers of the American Bible Society in their treatment of the Baptists. Every candid man will acknowledge that it would have comported with the dignity of the Managers to have pursued a similar course towards our denomination. Our readers are all aware

that the Rev. S. H. Cone is the President of the American and Foreign Bible Society, a gentleman in whose character, among many other highly estimable traits, stands pre-eminent that of CANDOR. No one can read the fifth section without the impression that, while an indirect imputation is thrown upon all our denomination, the President of our Society is singled out, as having, for the sake of obtaining appropriations for the Burmese version, dishonourably concealed the fact, that it translated βαπτίζω, *immerse*. We hope that, for the honour of the Board, it will at some day appear, that this paragraph was *hastily* read and approved, and its real import was not apprehended at the moment, except by the heart of him who penned it.

To the history of the circumstances connecting our versions with the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Calcutta Auxiliary, and the American Bible Society, the following particulars must here be added in order to understand how far either Mr. Cone, or the denomination to which he belongs, has been guilty of concealment in this matter.

In the Fourth Report of the American Bible Society, (1820) page 51, is the following paragraph: "The British and Foreign Bible Society having offered five hundred pounds sterling for the first thousand copies of every approved translation of the New Testament into any dialect of India, in which no translation had been previously printed, the Serampore translators are mentioned by the Committee of that Society as having satisfactorily complied with the terms proposed by accomplishing and printing three versions, the Pushtoo, the Kunkun, and the Telinga or Teloogo; by which, on the presentation of the required number of copies of each, they are entitled to £1500 sterling from the Committee."



This record is made seven years after "the Committee of that Society" had been officially informed that the missionaries at Serampore always translated βαπτίζω *immerse*.

In the Fifth Report of the American Bible Society (1821) on page 44th, is the following record:

"An interesting communication has recently been received by your Managers from those excellent men who are engaged in translating and publishing the Holy Scriptures at SERAMPORE. Twenty-six years have now elapsed since they commenced their work of translating the Scriptures into the languages of India. They have now published the whole Bible in five of those languages; the New Testament and some parts of the Old in ten more; in six more the New Testament is brought more than half through the press; and in ten more some one of the gospels is printed; and in several, all four of the gospels."

The Bengali version, our readers all know, was the first prepared by "those excellent men" (Baptists) at Serampore. "Twenty-six years," the Report of the American Bible Society for 1821 (only the fifth year of its existence) says, "have now elapsed" since its commencement, and yet in 1835, it is treated by the Managers as a version *then to be made*.

On page 45th, of the same Report (1821) the Managers say:

"The Rev. William Ward, of Serampore, having made a visit to the United States, in the course of last winter, the Managers gladly embraced the opportunity of presenting to him, and through him to his fellow labourers, Doctors Carey and Marshman, copies of the best edition of the Bible published by the American Bible Society, as an expression of their esteem, and of their high approbation



of the long and successful exertions of these servants of God, in translating and diffusing the Holy Scriptures."

On the 6th page of the Ninth Report (1825) appears this memorandum:

"The Society's Library has been enriched by a copy of the Bible in the Chinese language (Dr. Marshman's Translation) presented by Messrs. Carey, Marshman and Ward, of Serampore."

In the Fourteenth Report (1830) page 53, the Managers remark:

"In the last Report it was mentioned that an appropriation of \$1200 had been made to the American Board of Baptist Missions, for the purpose of publishing the Scriptures in the Burman Empire, where this body have a promising Mission. This money has been remitted, and with fervent prayers to the Author of the Bible that he will open a wide and effectual door for the reception of his truth. A far greater sum than the present might be advantageously sent to the same field, were it in the power of the Board to furnish it."

On pages 42 and 43 of the Seventeenth Report (1833) they state:

"From the Baptist Mission stations in Burmah pleasing evidence continues to be received as to the facilities they afford for circulating the Sacred Scriptures. The New Testament has there been translated by the Rev. Mr. Judson, and also different portions of the Old."

These are only a portion of the notices of our versions by the American Board before 1835. Now, we ask whether it is *probable*, that while such favourable notices were published, the Managers never thought of making themselves acquainted with the fact, that *βανριζω* was translated? Having their word to the contrary, we do not

*here* assert that the fact was officially communicated to them. But were they destitute of any of the ordinary means of obtaining the information *if they wished it*? Were there not Baptist members of their Board? Had they not *personal intercourse with Mr. Ward, one of the translators*? Were they not in constant official intercourse with the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, who were officially informed of the fact? Had they not direct communication with the English and American Baptist missionaries who were themselves the translators?

The question will hardly be asked, "Was it probable that the Baptist missionaries would translate βαπτίζω?" No man who claims a tithe of the intelligence of any Manager of the American Bible Society would suppose, upon the least reflection, that Baptist missionaries, in translating the Holy Scriptures into a heathen tongue, would leave in an unknown language all the words relating to the ordinance of baptism. That such an anomaly should take place, and that *all* our translators and our missionary boards should agree to it, and that the denomination in England and America should quietly acquiesce, is an imagination too gross for any as much acquainted as the Board of Managers must be with Baptist principles, to dwell upon for a moment even as a hypothesis.

But the Managers of the American Bible Society were not in this matter left to inference, however obvious, however unavoidable. In April, 1833, the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions unanimously passed the following resolutions:

"*Resolved*, That the Board feel it to be their duty to adopt all prudent measures to give to the heathen the pure word of God in their own languages; and to furnish their

missionaries with all the means in their power, to make their translations as exact a representation of the mind of the Holy Spirit, as may be possible.

“*Resolved*, That all the missionaries of the Board, who are, or who shall be, engaged in translating the Scriptures, be instructed to endeavour, by earnest prayer and diligent study, to ascertain the precise meaning of the original text; to express that meaning as exactly as the nature of the languages, into which they shall translate the Bible, will permit, and to *transfer* no words which are capable of being literally *translated*.”

Every proper degree of publicity was immediately given to these resolutions. They were printed in our Missionary Magazine for the following month, copies of which were laid on the table of the Board of the American Bible Society by S. H. Cone, at that time one of the Corresponding Secretaries of the Institution, and were furnished to any one, who wished, of the individual Managers. After the publication of these resolutions, how can the Managers consistently profess their ignorance that the Baptists *translated*, and did not *transfer* the words concerning baptism? Yet at the anniversary in May, 1831, the Society resolved to distribute the Bible among all the accessible population of the globe within the shortest practicable period; and by direction of the Board of Managers, a circular was addressed to missionaries and missionary societies of different religious denominations, encouraging them to expect, that whenever the Old Testament or the New, or other book of the Bible, should be correctly translated and ready (without note or comment) for the press, they should receive the aid requisite for the publication of the same. In consequence of this circular, the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions applied

for aid in behalf of the Burman Scriptures, and in 1835, *two years after the passage of the resolutions by the Baptist Board*, seven thousand dollars were granted for those Baptist versions. Nineteenth Report of the American Bible Society, (1835) pages 52 and 53.

We do not desire to deduce the slightest inference which the facts before us do not most unquestionably warrant. The Managers of the American Bible Society have more than once plead ignorance in excuse for their measures; but ignorance under the circumstances which we have developed, is *inexcusable*. Shall it be said that a body of forty or fifty men, having charge of an institution which at the time was second to none in America, remained twenty years ignorant of the character of versions on what they now regard as a most vital point, and yet were from time to time commending them, and sometimes making donations to them? Shall it be said that all this time they had every opportunity of informing themselves in that of which they were ignorant, and neglected to do it? Shall it be said that every thing in the character, the preaching, the writing and the conversation of our denomination, was calculated to enlighten them, and they knew us not while associated with us? Shall it be said that they grant money from time to time to a Missionary Board, and not one among them makes himself acquainted with the doings of that Board? Do the Managers of the American Bible Society so conduct their business that they do not esteem it necessary to read the reports of missionary societies, or their religious magazines? And then shall they insinuate that the Baptists have deceived them all along, and especially select the President of the American and Foreign Bible Society against whom to direct such a shaft?

Here it may be asked, why did Messrs. Pearce and Yates mention that βαπτίζω was translated? The reply is obvious. The Bengali version, after having been patronized by the British and Foreign Bible Society and the Calcutta Auxiliary from the commencement of their existence with a knowledge of the fact that βαπτίζω was translated, was eventually rejected, not because any new information was communicated concerning it, but because some of the missionaries of the Independents found Baptist views rapidly spreading in India, and wished to check them. The influence of the Independents and Churchmen caused those Bible Societies to refuse any further support to versions that translated βαπτίζω. It was very proper therefore for the missionaries, in applying to the American Bible Society to mention on what ground aid was withheld by the others. But it was exceedingly hazardous for the Managers of the American Bible Society to follow a sectarian example, and then to profess that they had been nearly twenty years acting in *utter ignorance* of matters which it behooved them to know, and which it required scarcely the semblance of exertion to learn.

To make this subject clear to the most obtuse mind, let us take a case strictly analogous. The American Sunday School Union is an institution embracing all evangelical denominations. The Baptists have co-operated in it without difficulty, from the period of its organization. Thousands of Sabbath schools have been established and sustained by it, and a very fair proportion among our denomination. In the latter it is constantly taught that there is only *one faith, one Lord, one baptism*, that is, as we understand it, that immersion, and only immersion, is baptism. No official communication of this fact has ever, to our knowledge, been made to the Managers of the

American Sunday School Union. Yet have we no apprehensions that when that institution is sufficiently strong to do without the Baptists, the Managers will decline either to establish or sustain any schools, in which the doctrine is taught that immersion alone is baptism, because that doctrine is not received by all the denominations represented in the Union. Least of all do we fear, that if such an untoward event should take place, the Managers would pretend that we had all along deceived them, or kept them in *ignorance* upon this subject.

We are informed in this section that, when the Committee on Distribution were unable to recommend any course to the Board, a Special Committee was appointed, consisting of seven members, "a Presbyterian, an Episcopalian, a Baptist, a Methodist, a Moravian, one of the Reformed Dutch Church, and one from the Society of Friends."

It is customary, we believe, in deliberative bodies, when a question occurs, on which there is a difference of opinion, and a special committee is appointed to discuss it and report thereon, to constitute that committee so as to represent as fairly as possible both sides of the question. Thus in Congress when a committee is appointed on a matter affecting the Administration, it is usually reprobated as violent party action, if more than four out of seven, or five out of nine, be selected from one side. By nearly equalizing the representation of interests in the committee, a full and free discussion of the point at issue is secured, and the nearest approach possible to impartiality is attained. In the case before us, *six* Anti-baptists\* were put on committee with *one* Baptist, and such

\* We use the term "Anti-baptist," not in disrespect or reproach. "Pædo-baptist" is not so appropriate in the present instance, be-

a selection of members made for that committee as to give the whole a denominational aspect. We have before said that we considered the Board as decidedly wrong in making a denominational affair of the matter. In the Board of a general Bible Society, every thing which is likely to awaken denominational jealousy ought to be studiously avoided. The general question before the Society growing out of the case of the Bengali version, was this. On points of Philology, involving doctrines or practice, in which evangelical Christians, supporting the American Bible Society, differ from each other, what course should be followed in the translation of Scripture? Should the words, on the supposed meaning of which the difference depends, be translated from the original Scriptures or transferred from the English version? The committee to examine and report upon the principles involved in such a question as the latter, ought, in our apprehension, to have numbered at least three out of seven in favour of translation, no matter to what denomination they belonged. But to appoint six Anti-baptists out of seven, to consider the claims of a Baptist version upon the patronage of the Society, and to select one from each denomination, as a sort

cause the Friends or Quakers, represented in the committee, do not properly come under that appellation, and the question at issue did not regard Pædo-baptism or the baptism of children. But six of the committee represented bodies, whose general practice, as regards the ordinance of baptism is *opposed* to that of the Baptists. In respect to the Friend, the selection was peculiarly unfortunate. He represented a body who deny the present obligation of the ordinances, and of course it might have been expected that he would prefer to conceal the injunction relative to one of them under an unknown tongue. Were the same course pursued with the observance of the Lord's Supper, he could scarcely oppose it from conscientious motives.



of representative, who was to feel, not that he sat upon committee as an individual to judge of a general principle of abstract right, but that he acted in behalf of the sect or body of men to which he belonged, was, in our apprehension, the most direct method of arousing a sectarian spirit in the minds of all concerned.

An illustration from common life may conduce to render this principle clear to every understanding.

In ordinary circumstances two men in private conversation have no hesitation in expressing their respective views of a matter on which they differ, and, if both are candid, the one who has truth on his side, has some prospect of convincing the other. But let the latter have two coadjutors to assist him in argument, is it not likely that they will keep each other in countenance, and overpower the former by the multiplicity, if not by the force of their arguments? If, then, instead of three, there are six on one side, while the man who is opposed to them is left without an assistant in word or counsel, and without the presence even of a spectator to express assent to truth and dissent from error, is it not in the very nature of the human mind, that the six will strengthen each other in their original opinions, rather than yield to an individual who is opposed to them?

We grant, indeed, that when the six Anti-baptists were appointed on committee with one Baptist on a question involving the rights of the latter, the former were selected as men of surpassing intellect. But the greater the intellect, the more danger to be apprehended from it when swayed by interest or prejudice. In the present case both combined their influence. The six acting in behalf of their respective denominations, were interested to check the propagation of Baptist sentiments, and influenced by the manner in which Pædo-baptists generally allow them-



selves to talk of Baptists as a people of little intelligence and easily led, were prejudiced against the body of the denomination. Having therefore secured the assent of two or three intelligent men among us, they felt little apprehension of any serious consequences from their decision. Under these circumstances they recommended the resolutions afterwards adopted by the Board.

The noble stand of the Managers of an *American Bible Society*, should have been: "We know no denomination in our constitution, and we are determined not to recognise any in our proceedings. All who contribute a certain amount of funds become members of our Society, and we design always to dispense those funds in strict accordance with our views of the constitution, and without any regard to the practices or prejudices of this or that denomination."

The course which the Managers *did* pursue, produced the precise result which might have been anticipated. The representatives of the different denominations adopted such views as might have been expected to please the majority of those whom they respectively represented. General principles could no longer be seen. When the Committee on Distribution had the matter before them, they "were unable to recommend any course which would satisfy all concerned;" but when a Presbyterian *as such* was appointed, an Episcopalian *as such*, and a Baptist, &c., *as such*, the inability vanished. The six Anti-baptists brought in an Anti-baptist report, and the Baptist presented a minority report.

The unfortunate position assumed by the Board, is that of an ecclesiastical council representing different sects and legislating on the points of difference. We have seen that the question was one of a general nature, and might with

as great propriety be applied to differences of opinion regarding any other portion of Scripture as to the passages relating to baptism. It would have been well to have taken it in its general aspect rather than to have seized upon a particular feature, in which six denominations could have been arrayed against one. On the abstract question of translating or transferring *all* disputed passages, the merits of the controversy properly depended, and had they been thus examined, we think the decision would have been unanimous in favour of translation. But now, the Managers have opened a wide door for controversy. The Presbyterians of the Old and New school have separated, and their differences of opinion, and of practice, are already greater than those of the Presbyterians and Dutch Reformed. According to the principles of action adopted by the Board, each of the General Assemblies will henceforth be entitled to a representation on a committee upon translation. We know that there are many passages in the Old and New Testaments, especially in the Epistle to the Romans, which an Old School man understands and must translate, if he translates them at all, differently from a New School man. Suppose that a missionary connected with one Assembly finds fault with the translations made by those connected with the other, and insists that his people cannot use them. He is now entitled to demand, according to precedent, a committee representing *denominations*. Denominational strife is again excited. The Methodist representative, the Moravian representative, the Quaker representative, and the Episcopalian representative, peradventure array themselves with the New School, and insist that the Old School shall *transfer* all the disputed passages, or the patronage of the Society will be withdrawn from their versions. The

latter refuse, and they are cut off, as the Baptists have been, without a penny. The Board have then to go on as they have in the case of βαπτίζω, and insist that *all* the translations which they patronize, shall transfer the disputed passages. But, *if the principle be fully carried out*, the case cannot stop here. The Presbyterian representative and the Congregational representative dispute with the Episcopalian upon other passages and individual words. By the same rule these must be transferred. The Quaker disputes upon still more. They must all be transferred. We need not pursue the history. If each case in which translators conscientiously differ, were examined with the same denominational jealousy, which commenced in India the opposition to the Baptist versions, we have no hesitation in affirming, that the principle which demands the transfer of βαπτίζω and its cognates, would require the transfer of so large a portion of the New Testament as to render it almost useless to the heathen. Who, with such considerations before him, does not see that the principle itself is wrong. We here copy from the Circular:

“The whole subject was now postponed for a further and careful consideration. The Managers were not yet disposed to adopt the resolutions submitted, as they hoped, by a prudent delay, for the adjustment of the difficulty which had arisen, in a way satisfactory to all who were interested.

“Before the next meeting of the Board, in September, several letters were received from Baptist clergymen, in whose judgment they had great regard, expressing the hope that no hasty measures would be adopted, and suggesting some changes and additions in relation to the pending resolutions, which they had seen in a Baptist paper.

“These letters were laid before the Board, and the proposed changes were made. After frequent postponements and much deliberation, (more probably than they ever before bestowed on any

one topic,) at a special meeting in February, 1836, they adopted the following preamble and resolutions—resolutions which had been prepared, or modified, and approved by *some* of the most intelligent and worthy Baptist clergymen in America.

“By the Constitution of the American Bible Society, its Managers are, in the circulating the Holy Scriptures, restricted to such copies as are “without note or comment;” and in the English language, to the “version in common use.” The design of these restrictions clearly seems to have been to simplify and mark out the duties of the Society, so that all religious denominations of which it is composed might harmoniously unite in performing these duties.

“As the Managers are now called to aid extensively in circulating the Sacred Scriptures in languages other than the English, they deem it their duty, in conformity with the obvious spirit of their compact, to adopt the following resolutions as the rule of their conduct in making appropriations for the circulation of the Scriptures in all *foreign tongues*.”

The most fruitful source of error is the want of precision in language. This fault has been more than once remarked in the circular before us. The “*several* letters received from Baptist clergymen,” in the foregoing extract, were letters, as we have been informed by members of the Board, from *two individuals*, and the “*some* of the most intelligent, worthy Baptist clergymen in America” who “prepared or modified” the resolutions, were these two individuals. That individual Baptists, who were not members of the acting Board, should form an erroneous opinion when the matter was first proposed to them, is not remarkable, but that the Managers of the American Bible Society should mention the hasty opinions of *several* or *some* Baptists as a vindication of their conduct, certainly deserves comment. If the argument be really a valid one, should they not have informed those who read their vindication of the *several* hundred thousands of

Baptists, having among them nearly all "of the most intelligent, worthy Baptist clergymen in America," and Great Britain, and India, who condemn the course of the Managers? Should they not have mentioned, as of equal validity, that *some* (we use the term for *two* in imitation of good example,) of their own number, themselves Pædo-baptists, disapproved their course? Should they not have mentioned that *many* Pædo-baptists, out of the Board, express their decided dissent? This argument, if, in a question regarding the *faithfulness* of translating or transferring the word of God, it ought to have weight, has certainly not been *impartially* presented by the Managers.

The first paragraph of the preamble is objectionable on account of the fault which we have noticed in all these proceedings. The Society is described as "composed" "of religious denominations." This is an obvious error which a reference to its constitution will expose. No mention of denominations is made in that instrument. Many, we doubt not, have been members of the Society who belong to no "religious denomination," and many more who could not be classed with the denominations represented in the committee.

The first line of the second paragraph corroborates (we presume unintentionally) a gross error which has deceived numbers. "As the Managers are NOW called to aid extensively in circulating the Scriptures in other languages than the English," &c.

The Managers had been "extensively" aiding in this for many years. The fact is that they aided *more extensively* for several years before the passage of the resolutions than since. In 1832—1833 they gave for foreign distribution \$13,000; the next year \$27,485; the next year \$37,000. In 1838 they gave for the same purpose \$17,000; in 1839, \$19,465, and in 1840, \$10,549.

“*Resolved*, That in appropriating money for the translating, printing, or distributing the Sacred Scriptures in foreign languages, the Managers feel at liberty to encourage only such versions as conform in the principles of their translation to the common English version, at least so far as that all the religious denominations represented in this Society can consistently use and circulate said versions in their several schools and communities.

“*Resolved*, That a copy of the above preamble and resolutions be sent to each of the missionary boards accustomed to receive pecuniary grants from this Society, with a request that the same may be transmitted to their respective mission stations where the Scriptures are in process of translation, and also that the said several missionary boards be informed that their applications for aid be accompanied with a declaration that the versions which they propose to circulate are executed in accordance with the above resolutions.”

The first consideration that strikes a reader, when perusing these resolutions, is their indefiniteness. They resemble βαπτίζω, *transferred* into a heathen tongue, and require that some one should go with them and explain their meaning to those who receive them. It must be remembered, that the Managers permitted precisely four years to escape after their passage, before issuing the present circular, which in part explains the circumstances that called them forth, and thus gives some idea of their meaning. Without some accompanying explanation, who would suspect that the design, and the sole design, of the first resolution was, to compel the translators of the Holy Scriptures to transfer βαπτίζω and its cognates? Of course when “a copy” was sent to a Missionary Board, the Secretary was obliged to accompany it with information to that effect: otherwise it would lead to a world of conjecture. Thus the American Bible Society and the Pædobaptist public were kept in ignorance of the doings of the Board of Managers, and so great was this ignorance, that

multitudes who voted for the resolutions and their preamble, never knew till they learned from Baptist publications that the subject had any thing to do with our versions of the Word of God.

But when the Managers, *on the ground of these resolutions*, reject the Baptist versions, they subject themselves to other charges. They assume to judge of *the consistency of many Pædo-baptists*. Nearly one half of Protestant Pædo-baptists now living, use Scriptures in which βαπτίζω is translated by words signifying *immerse*. They have so done from the commencement of Protestantism. The Managers of the American Bible Society, now voluntarily occupy the seats of umpires between the sentiments and practices of such men, and gravely determine that a large portion of their Pædo-baptist constituents are *inconsistent*. We are not called upon to defend the consistency of our Pædo-baptist friends, but we are at liberty to inquire, who made the Managers of the American Bible Society judges of such matters? Would it not be more in unison with the business for which they were appointed, to examine into *their own consistency*? A large majority of Pædo-baptist scholars of all denominations who have written upon the subject, and of course all Baptists, have expressed the opinion that the proper meaning of βαπτίζω is *immerse*. The Managers of the American Bible Society have not pretended to advance one argument to prove the contrary, and yet have decided that such a translation is *unfaithful*. Is there no inconsistency in this?

“Such was the course adopted by the managers after more than six months of candid deliberation. No resolutions, it is believed, were ever adopted with a more conscientious conviction of duty, or with more kind feelings towards those who dissented. It was

the aim in preparing these rules to be impartial, to withhold patronage from all versions of a sectarian nature, and to encourage all which are faithfully translated, and yet in such a way that the different branches of this compact can unite in using them as they so cordially unite in using the English version.

"The Managers have now stated what they believe to have been the purpose of the founders in relation to versions, and also what has been the intentional practice of those who have since conducted its affairs. They have furthermore given a concise history of their doings in regard to a denominational version in India which they were requested to patronize. These statements, it is believed, will satisfy most of those connected with the society, that a just and constitutional course has been pursued, and that no other course could have been adopted, particularly in relation to the latter topic, without putting the very existence of the society in jeopardy. But the Managers regret that notwithstanding the resolutions in question were prepared in their present shape, by wise, conscientious Baptists, who viewed, and still view them as coincident with the constitution, notwithstanding they received the full sanction of the Society in May, 1836, and have been approved of by all the auxiliaries, so far as known, they have yet failed to satisfy many of the Baptist denomination, and have called forth an amount and style of opposition not very common among the professed sons of peace. Charges in various forms have been made against the doings of the Board, some of which demand a brief reply."

We regret that we are compelled, in examining this extract, to express a degree of disapprobation, which may seem to amount to direct censure. The first sentence assures us that the "course" before described was "adopted after more than six months of *candid deliberation*." The whole course of the reasoning, set forth in the present circular to justify the Managers in rejecting the Baptist versions, is based upon the assumption, that these versions are "in their judgment *unfaithful*." We have before alluded to the fact that during the "six months" of deli-



beration this ground was not, even professedly, maintained by the Managers. It was once assumed, and almost immediately abandoned upon the expressed conviction of a Pædo-baptist divine, a distinguished member of the Board, that it could not be maintained. The Baptist members of the Board often challenged their Pædo-baptist friends, to take this ground, and discuss the faithfulness of the versions in question. This was uniformly declined. The ground assumed was, that, because they were confined to the commonly received version in our language, therefore, in foreign tongues they should confine themselves to similar versions. The question of *faithfulness*, we repeat, was not discussed, and the "course" of the Board was not *professedly* "adopted" in reference to this principle. Yet we are now told that our versions were rejected *because the Managers considered them "unfaithful."* Was the deliberation then "*candid?*" Did the Managers speak freely their real sentiments?

Two men, connected in business, differ in their views of a certain transaction. The one disapproves of it on the score of expediency: the other endeavours to show that the ultimate results will be beneficial. They discuss the subject for six months, and at last, being unable to agree, separate. Four years after, the former of the two, publishes a document to show that he all along believed the measure approved by the latter was *dishonest*, and that was his reason for dissenting from it, although he did not give that reason at the time. Had he given it, the other might easily have proved the honesty of the measure, and thus have prevented a separation. Shall we call the former a *candid* man, and say that he conducted for six months a *candid* deliberation?

The remainder of this paragraph concerns only the *motives* by which the Managers profess to have been actuated. On these we have no comment to make. Motives are between men and their Maker ; words and actions are proper subjects of discussion for the public. We have shown that the rules are *not* impartially applied, otherwise they would extend to many other points of difference in translation, besides βαπτίζω ; and we now design to show that they *extend* patronage to “versions of a sectarian nature,” while they do *not* “encourage all which are faithfully translated.”

The difference between the great body of Pædo-baptists and the Baptists in this country on the ordinance of baptism is fully understood. The Pædo-baptists profess that sprinkling, pouring and immersion, equally constitute the act indicated by βαπτίζω ; the Baptists profess that immersion is *always* implied by the word. To transfer βαπτίζω into a foreign tongue, is a virtual acknowledgment that it has not the fixed meaning, immerse. To insist upon such a transfer, is directly and openly to favour the Pædo-baptist side of the question. To patronize only such versions as make the transfer, is to patronize only Pædo-baptist versions. Unless, therefore, the Managers assume that the Pædo-baptists are so indisputably right, that to hold their views is not to be sectarian, they must acknowledge that they extend patronage to sectarian versions. If they do insist that Pædo-baptists only are right, and so indisputably right that their views are in no sense sectarian, then the American Bible Society becomes to all intents and purposes, Pædo-baptist. When the contest comes upon Επισκοπος, which, if the Managers impartially carry out their resolutions, must occur with the first version that

translates the word, they will be obliged to take either Episcopal or Presbyterian ground, and thus the sectarian character of their new position will be more and more developed.

The tendency of this new order of things is to direct the attention of translators to the views of the majority, and not to the meaning of the sacred oracles. They must now regard "the principles of the English version," and not the indisputable design of the Holy Spirit. They must see that *other denominations* do not find some occasion to cavil, or that the representative of one of those denominations does not assert that his people cannot consistently use the new version. These considerations, no intelligent man can suppose, conduce to "encourage faithful translations."

In the next paragraph the Managers assert that the history which they have given "will satisfy most of those connected with the Society, that a just and constitutional course has been pursued, and that no other course could have been adopted" "without putting the very existence of the Society in danger." We speak in perfect candour and kindness when we assert, that we cannot discover the least shadow of fact or argument on which this assumption is predicated. Who or what had threatened the "existence of the Society?" Had any body of men or any individual intimated any intention to separate from it? The Edinburgh Bible Society has not adopted any resolutions similar to those of the American. It still continues to aid the Baptist versions. Is its "very existence in jeopardy?" But the Managers say that they have given a history which will satisfy most of their constituents of this point with regard to their own Society. In what part

of their circular is it mentioned? By what course of reasoning is it sustained? Where are the facts adduced to show the extent of the apprehended danger? What are the illustrations employed to set it forth in all its fearful vividness? We look in vain through every paragraph for a reply. This sentence alone informs of the danger, and assures the reader, *whose attention had never before been called to the matter*, that enough *has already* been said to *satisfy* him, that, had not the Managers at the critical moment adopted the measure of cutting off the Baptists from any participation in their funds, so far as respected foreign distribution, the “very existence of the Society” would have been put “in jeopardy.”

But since the Managers have themselves omitted to do what in this sentence they profess to have done, we will endeavour to supply the deficiency. There *was* danger, we admit,—not in declining, but in adopting the course which they have pursued. The immediate and obvious result was to separate from them a denomination numbering in this country more than half a million of communicants, and three or four millions of adherents. The ultimate results are in futurity. We have seen that the resolutions adopted, if invariably carried into operation, must produce unnumbered difficulties, and possibly divisions more extensive than that effected by cutting off the Baptists. In addition we may justly lament the occasion given to the world to triumph over the dissensions of Christians, the harsh language employed against our denomination, and the dishonourable insinuations thrown out from the pulpit and the press, that we had for many years deceived our coadjutors, but at last had been detected and exposed. It cannot be denied that harsh retorts have sometimes been

given by our friends. We do not justify them. The points in which we think the Managers have erred, can be discussed without the imputation of any unholy motives. But the immediate cause of all these subjects of regret, has been "the course" adopted by the Managers. Should the feelings excited and the prejudices cherished by it, result in other and worse consequences, we must refer them to their proper origin.

We now come to the replies which the Managers have endeavoured to make to six charges which they have enumerated as brought against their proceedings. Should all these charges have been irrefutably answered by the Managers, any one who has read our articles must be convinced, that a tithe of the difficulties would not have been removed. Incontrovertible facts have been here adduced to prove many of the statements of this circular incorrect, and to exhibit the fallacy of the arguments on which the course of the American Bible Society is founded. These we shall not now repeat, but proceed to examine the mode in which the managers attempt to reply to six out of the hundred charges brought against them.

*"First.—The Managers are charged with having changed their policy, now objecting to and withholding aid from versions of such character as they once patronized without hesitation.*

"The reply of the Board here is, that they never in a single instance granted aid to a version which they knew at the time to be of such a character that only a part of their associates could consistently use it. Taking it for granted that none would ask them to aid denominational versions, they now find that in two instances they have aided such, though in honest ignorance. It appears that a small edition of an Indian Gospel was once printed by them, where *baptizo* was translated by a word which signifies to *sprinkle*

or *pour*; that in one version India has been aided where the same Greek word has been translated by a term signifying *immerse*. Had the peculiarities of these translations in either case been known at the time, they would by no means have been encouraged."

Any one who carefully examines our articles will see that the ground of the charge which we have really brought, has been avoided by the Managers, and another substituted in its stead.

We charge that "the Managers have changed their policy." They originally professed that they would disseminate the Scriptures "in the received versions where they exist." The Bengali then existed, and had existed for many years, was extensively received, and was the only version in the language. The British and Foreign Bible Society patronized it, the American Bible Society praised it. It underwent no change in respect to βαπτίζω, but in 1836, twenty years after the Managers professed their design to disseminate the Scriptures "in the received versions where they exist," they added a condition before unknown, viz: that said version should transfer βαπτίζω. Was not this a change of policy?

That they had in the meanwhile for a number of years patronized the Burman Scriptures which translate βαπτίζω; that they had highly commended all the Serampore translations; and other similar facts which we have adduced, are collateral evidences, but do not constitute the strong ground of proof that the former policy of the Society was different from that which it now pursues. It is a plausible, but not a sound mode of argument to attack a collateral evidence as though it was the real and sole ground of proof.

"Had the peculiarity of these translations in either case

been known at the time, they would by no means have been encouraged."

On this sentence the Managers will permit us to express strong doubts. We have before shown that they had the most abundant means of knowledge with regard to the Baptist versions, and that if they were ignorant, their ignorance was wilful and inexcusable. The whole course of the American Bible Society, from its foundation till the adoption of the present line of policy, indicates a strict adherence to the modes of procedure pursued by the institution which delights to regard it as a daughter, the British and Foreign Bible Society. It would unnecessarily protract these articles to explain the reasons that influenced the latter, in its rejection of the versions which it had for many long years patronized, and to show the difference in the position of the two institutions. We do not justify the course of the British Society, nor would we plead its apology; but we can discover, in the division of parties and the dissensions in its midst, the semblance of an excuse which is not discernible in the condition or previous history of the American Society.

*"Secondly.—The Managers are charged with partiality, by allowing other denominations to make such foreign versions as they choose, while Baptists have not this privilege.*

"This charge can have no foundation, unless other denominations choose to make versions of such a character that all the members of the Bible Society can use them, while those who complain make such versions as their denomination alone can consistently use. The Managers can have no motive to partiality towards any of their associates, and are conscious of none, provided all lay aside denominational work, and adhere alike to the spirit and rules of this association when co-operating with it."

It is difficult for us to discover in the course of reasoning adopted by the Managers that careful regard to matters of fact which we firmly believe they would not purposely neglect to maintain. We have never seen it stated by Baptists that they "allow other denominations to make such foreign versions as they choose." In fact a doubt has *never* entered our mind, that the American Bible Society should reject any version which was proved to be *unfaithful*, provided that unfaithfulness was so great that the version could not be regarded as evangelical. We insert this provision, because bad as some of the Catholic versions are, they still communicate the essential truths of the gospel, and therefore the Society has, with great reason, circulated them in countries where they could not disseminate more faithful versions. We may still go farther. Where new versions were required, the Society was bound by its original pledge to disseminate "the most faithful." Had the Bengali been an entirely new version, and had other new versions in the same language been presented for the patronage of the Society at the same time, if the Baptist could have been proved to be *less faithful* than one of the other, we would not have denied that the Society acted in consistency with its original pledge in preferring to disseminate the *most faithful*. But this would have required no *new* course of policy, or new principle of action. No resolutions, embodying principles never before heard of, and incapable of being carried to their full result without ruin, would have been needed. In a word, no additional condition would have been invented to mar the peace and destroy the union of those who were labouring for the same Lord on common ground.



“ This charge can have no foundation, unless other denominations choose to make versions of such a character that all the members of the Bible Society can use them, while those who complain make such versions as their denomination alone can consistently use.”

We have already shown that Pædo-baptists of all evangelical denominations, while professing to be consistent, do use versions similar to those prepared by the Baptists, although at the same time we object to any such *new* condition being imposed on translators, that they should be required to prove that other denominations can use their versions. It is not in the constitution, it is not in the address of the convention. It is a novel invention and impracticable in its operation. Suppose that there are Hicksites among the supporters of the Bible Society. Must each translator ascertain whether *they* can *consistently* use his version? Suppose that some are Calvinists and some Arminians. Must each translator ascertain whether *both* can consistently use his version? Who has fixed the number of the denominations supporting the Bible Society at *seven*? We can easily count twenty, and believe that there are, or rather were, more. Must every translator ascertain whether each of these can consistently use his translation?

“ The managers can have no motive to partiality towards any of their associates, and are conscious of none, provided all lay aside denominational work, and adhere alike to the spirit and rules of this Association, when co-operating with it.”

We wish this sentence to be read with care. If it has any application to the case in hand, it is this : The managers believe the Baptists to be sectarians : and while our missionaries are engaged in Baptist missions, the mana-

gers must of course regard them as doing denominational work. When we translate the Scriptures and express our views of its meaning, this they regard as denominational. But if we took Pædo-baptist ground, and asserted that βαπτίζω had no fixed meaning, and in accordance with such views transferred the word, then they would at once admit that we had laid aside denominational work. In other words, to carry out the views of Pædo-baptists, is *not* denominational—to carry out those of Baptists, is. Should we do the former, the managers could have no motive of partiality and would be conscious of none: Let us do the latter, and then their partiality is not denied. Now who can be so blind, with such facts and such statements before him, as not to see that the managers in this matter stand solely on Pædo-baptist ground?

*“ Thirdly—The Managers are charged with laying down rules in regard to versions which Baptist translators cannot conscientiously follow.*

“ The reply is, that the managers lay down no rules which they do not consider as enjoined on them by the conditions of their union by the framers of the society. If these rules bear with undue pressure on any portion of the compact, it is for those who appoint the Board, and who have control of the constitution, to alter that instrument so *that men of every creed and sentiment may prepare such foreign versions as they please, with the expectation that they will be published out of the common Bible fund!* At present such license would be deemed a violation of what the constitution requires. But the Board (while they would not judge for others) are unable to see why these rules which the complainants themselves cheerfully observe in relation to the English, French, and other old versions, cannot be also followed in preparing new versions; that is, by domesticating in them the Greek words *baptizo* and *baptisma*, so that other missionaries can use them as well as Baptists. It cannot be affirmed that errors will be taught

by these transferred words, nor can they be more unintelligible to the heathen than many other words which it is well known are transferred from the original into the Bengalee and Burmese versions, and must be into all versions made in limited pagan tongues. Some of the words, it is true, must be explained by the dictionary, or the living teacher, before the common reader will understand them. So must many, very many, words in his own vernacular be thus taught. How many words are there in the English Bible, and in every other which the illiterate reader does not comprehend until instructed by some foreign aid? Where is there a modern tongue which does not abound in transferred words? The very name of most religious denominations is derived from the Greek."

The reasoning in this paragraph is far from being of that strong, consecutive character, which we might anticipate from a body of men noted for their intelligence and judgment. The discrepancy between the first and second sentence, or what schoolmen would call the "non sequitur" of the second sentence, is almost ludicrous. The managers profess that "they lay down no rules which they do not consider as enjoined on them by the conditions of their union by the framers of the society," and "if these rules bear with undue pressure on any portion of the compact," the constitution must be altered to permit "men of every creed and sentiment to prepare such versions as they please." We are not surprised at the mark of exclamation and astonishment affixed to such a conclusion. The simple matter of fact is that the *constitution* has no provision on the subject. The idea of altering or modifying the constitution, we have never seen suggested *except in this circular*. What article of the constitution the managers propose to change we cannot conjecture. The first and second articles embrace the object of the organization in the following words:

## ARTICLE I.

This Society shall be known by the name of the AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY, of which the sole object shall be to encourage a wider circulation of the Holy Scriptures without note or comment. The only copies in the English language, to be circulated by the Society, shall be of the versions now in common use.

## ARTICLE II.

All Bible Societies shall be allowed to purchase, at cost, from this Society, Bibles for distribution within their own districts, and the officers of all such Bible Societies as shall hereafter agree to place their surplus revenue, after supplying their own districts with the Bible, at the disposal of this society, shall be entitled to vote in all meetings of the Society.

All the remaining articles are confined to the management of the institution and have no relation whatsoever to modes of translation, or to the character of the versions patronized. What then is necessary to be changed?

But the managers imply that the Baptists require "*that men of every creed and sentiment may prepare such foreign versions as they please, with the expectation that they will be published out of the common Bible fund.*"

If the Baptists have made such a requisition, where is it recorded? In what language is it couched? Who originated, and who advocated the proposition?

The Baptists resolved to instruct their missionaries "who are or who shall be engaged in translating the Scriptures," "to endeavour, by earnest prayer, and diligent study, to ascertain the exact meaning of the *original text*; to express that meaning as exactly as the nature of the language into which they shall translate the Bible, will permit; and to transfer no words which are capable of being literally translated."

The managers of the American Bible Society determin-

ed to patronize no versions which translated βαπτίζω and its cognates. If then the reasoning of the managers be just, to allow βαπτίζω and its cognates to be translated, is to allow "men of every creed and sentiment" to translate every part of the Bible just as they please. The question is not canvassed whether the translation of βαπτίζω be right or wrong. Such a question is not to be started: "the managers have not attempted to settle or touch any question as to philology or religious ordinances." But to translate the word at all, is the fearfully objectionable measure. To imitate the boldness of Luther and the other great and good men, who, amidst the thunders of the Vatican, *dared* to translate it, and to translate it in precisely the same meaning as such men gave to it, this is the utmost stretch of latitudinarianism. It is to permit "men of every creed and sentiment" to give any meaning to Scripture that they please. The Romanist may prescribe penance instead of repentance, and may teach men to worship images, in his versions of Scripture, and the managers can conscientiously circulate these versions and call such heresies mere "defects;" but if the Baptists translate βαπτίζω, there is no longer any measure to the enormity—the cup of error is filled to overflowing—"men of every creed and sentiment" then have ample authority to do as they please.

We have no charity for such reasoning. It is hard enough to have our versions called unfaithful; it is hard enough to have those of Roman Catholic preferred to them; it is hard enough to be stigmatized as deceivers; it is hard enough to have our motives misrepresented, our reasoning perverted, the facts that sustain our position omitted, and others published as constituting the *whole*

history of the case: these and many other matters on the face of this circular are hard to be borne: but to have it represented that to translate βαπτίζω, is to admit the quintessence of latitudinarianism, the sum and substance of the errors of "men of every creed and sentiment," this is insupportable. We will not believe that the managers of the American Bible Society weighed the language which they employed. We prefer in charity to suppose, that this circular is the production of *one* man, an individual *always* hostile to the Baptists, and the prime mover of the measures which separated them from the American Bible Society. As the circular first appeared anonymously, and was extensively distributed long before it was acknowledged by the managers, we prefer, when we come to reasoning like this before us, to presume that the document was not prepared by the managers, but was afterwards adopted by them to shield an efficient but imprudent officer of the Society. Under such a presumption, we will dwell no longer on language, which, we are convinced, no real friend of the managers will attempt to justify.

"But the Board (while they would not judge for others,) are unable to see why these rules, which the complainants themselves cheerfully observe in relation to the English, French, and other old versions, cannot be also followed in preparing new versions; that is, by domesticating in them the Greek words *baptizo* and *baptisma*, so that other missionaries can use them as well as Baptists."

Were the phraseology of this document to be judged by the rules of logical accuracy, the foregoing extract would imply that the Baptists had translated the Scriptures into English, French, &c., and that in these languages they had transferred βαπτίζω, &c. Ridiculous as such

a statement would appear to any one versed in the history of the Bible, it must be remembered that many of the friends of the American Bible Society have studiously circulated the report, that we, as a denomination, have published versions of the Scriptures in English made by ourselves. The English Scriptures issued by the American and Foreign Bible Society, although a literal transcript of King James' version of 1611, have been frequently stigmatized from the press and the pulpit as "*the Baptist Bible.*" Such has been the popular cry, and numbers of Pædobaptists have believed it. Let such read the foregoing sentence, and how can they avoid supposing that the Baptists have an English version of their own, and have been guilty of the inconsistency of translating βαπτίζω in other languages and transferring it in our own?

Yet the simple facts are these. We have as yet had nothing to do with the "French" version, and with regard to the "other old versions" of which the managers speak, *we know not what they mean.* Luther's version and other European continental versions which we have circulated, *translate* βαπτίζω. We have not yet seen it to be our duty to commence a new translation of the Scriptures in English. Such a work, if ever undertaken, will require great concentration of talents and piety, and many years of labour. When it will be accomplished, we do not trouble ourselves even to conjecture. When the Baptists *profess* to translate the Scriptures into any language, and transfer "words which are capable of being literally translated," *then* it will be sufficiently early to inquire why they cannot do the same with the Bengali and other new versions. But it seems that individuals have been guilty of inconsistency in such matters.

“The Rev. Joseph Hughes, a Baptist, and long a Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, had no scruple against transferring *baptizo*; nor has Rev. Mr. Sutton, now a missionary in India. Two able pamphlets, by Baptists in England, have just been published in favour of such a course. The Chippewa New-Testament, prepared by Dr. James, a Baptist, and printed in 1833, at Albany, has the word *baptizo transferred*.”

The managers, in our estimation, lose their dignity in thus arguing about the opinions and actions of two or three individuals. If they count a *hundred* men, professedly Baptist, who thought that, to secure the continuance of the patronage of certain Societies, it might be admissible to yield a conscientious scruple and conceal a portion of God's truth from those to whom we profess to communicate the whole, would their opinion affect the principle of the matter? If so, then *all the Baptists on the other side of the question* would present an overwhelming body of incontrovertible and indisputable argument against the managers.

Here we cannot avoid mentioning what has forcibly struck us, not only in this, but in another part of the circular which we have examined. The managers do not appear to rely upon the inherent strength of their argument, but if they can only assert that this or that Baptist thought so, or did so, no matter how completely he has since become convinced of his error and has abandoned it, the fact that a Baptist once happened in part to agree with them, is seized upon and held up to the world as proof that the board *must be right*. If Baptist authority, then, be so excellent, why not give it its due weight and yield to that side of the argument which has such an immense preponderance in its favour.



The fact that some words, (such as proper names) *must* be transferred from one language to another, is next alleged to prove the propriety of transferring βαπτίζω. A brief illustration will show the nature of this argument. There are no words in the Bengali corresponding to Gog and Magog. Therefore these names must be transferred. Therefore the word "murder" in the commandment, "Thou shall not murder," may with propriety be transferred into Bengali.

"But," says an objector, "the natives have a word which means 'murder,' and they will not understand the word transferred from the English or the Hebrew." No matter. Why, they have no word in their language into which we can translate "Calvinist," or "Quaker." What impropriety then in transferring the word "murder?" "Pagan tongues" are "limited." They must use "dictionaries," or be always taught by "the living teacher." "It cannot be affirmed that error will be taught by these transferred words."

The analogy between the hypothetical and the real case, is perfect. The command in relation to the ordinance of baptism, is not less explicit than the prohibition in regard to murder. If, because some proper names and other words, not inculcating important commands or prohibitions, must be transferred, therefore a conscientious translator is at liberty to conceal under a transferred term, a command which he believes himself capable of translating intelligibly; then any other command, injunction or prohibition of Scripture may upon the same principle, be concealed. If the principle be correct, it cannot be confined to βαπτίζω; if it be not correct, the managers of the

American Bible Society have erred in endeavouring to vindicate it.

*“Fourthly.—The Managers are charged with the inconsistency of patronizing German and Dutch Bibles, where baptizo is translated by words which signify immerse, and yet withholding aid from the Bengalee and Burmese Bibles translated in the same way.*

“The reply is, in the first place, that the former versions are *ancient* ‘received versions,’ such as the founders of the Society promised to patronize. In the next place those translated words alluded to, though they once signified immerse, have, like many words in the English Bible, lost their first meaning, and are now of as general import as the English word *baptize*. They are versions which both Baptists and Pædo-baptists can and do use continually without objection. Should the versions referred to in India, as they are in the main good, undergo a similar change as to the import of a few words, so that different denominations can use them, the managers will feel no scruple in granting them patronage. They will be viewed and treated as faithful versions when there is evidence that they convey to all the component parts of the Society, like the English and German Bibles, the mind of the Spirit. Let the Divine meaning be actually conveyed to the various readers, and it seems to the Board a matter of little moment whether this is effected through one tongue or another, or through a combination of several.”

The first sentence of this paragraph arrests the attention, as furnishing an additional illustration of the peculiar mode of reasoning that prevails throughout the circular. A document setting forth the reasons of a certain course of conduct by a public body, should be plain, perspicuous and direct in all its statements and arguments. Nothing should be left to allusion or implication. Yet here, as elsewhere, the phraseology implies an argument involving a matter of fact which is not presented in direct terms.

The founders of the Society promised to patronize "the received versions where they exist, and the most faithful where they may be required." The first clause included the Bengali which existed at the time. This fact could not be denied by the managers, but its admission would at once expose the impropriety of their course. Therefore in that part of the circular which refers *directly* to the Bengali version, they omit any allusion to this matter of fact. In the part before us, however, where the allusion might make its impression upon the common reader, without the liability of contradiction from a direct statement, the word "*ancient*," is prefixed to the phraseology of the founders, and the impression is given that they agreed to patronize only the *ancient* received versions. A strict construction of the language would involve the managers in the charge of a *positive misstatement of fact*; "*ancient* 'received versions' such as the founders of the Society promised to patronize." The founders did *not* promise to patronize "*such*." They promised to patronize "received versions"—*not* "*ancient* received versions." The restrictive qualification, no man has a right to prefix to their words, and when the case involves such grave considerations, the prefixion is justly liable to the severest censure.

"In the next place, those translated words alluded to, though they once signified immerse, have (like many words in the English Bible) lost their first meaning, and are now of as general import as the English word *baptize*."

We have already, to some extent, expressed our views on this reasoning, and shall therefore only add a few suggestions. The parenthesis furnishes information, which, connected with other parts of the circular, may be regard-

ed by some readers as no less strange than new. "The English Bible," the managers assure us, *is* "a faithful version," and it conveys "in view of all, the true Divine meaning." But here they inform us that "*many* of its words have lost their first meaning." If language have any significancy, we are here informed that the English Bible was originally an unfaithful translation, but that many of its words, having lost their original meaning, it now conveys the true Divine meaning, and has thus become a faithful version. And yet to the principles of this translation, which has thus strangely become faithful by influences, over which the translators had no control, all modern translators are required to conform their versions. Criticism on such argument would be supererogatory.

The managers admit that the German and Dutch Bibles are translated as our Bengali; but the words in question have since undergone a change of meaning, *therefore* they can patronize such versions, and otherwise they could *not* have patronized them. What an admission! Had the American Bible Society existed in the time of Luther, it could not have patronized his version of the Holy Scriptures. No, against the torch that set Europe on fire and has since illumined the world, the Society must have closed its eyes or joined the Pope in endeavouring to extinguish it.

No matter though the translation of the Scriptures into the vernacular tongues of Germany, broke down the strong holds of superstition and ignorance, and raised on the other hand a bulwark, against which all the powers of papacy have never been able to make head; no matter how good, how useful, or faithful was the version; it translated βαπτισμ, and *therefore* could not be patronized?

THUS THE MANAGERS OF THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT ON THE PRINCIPLE ON WHICH THEY OPPOSE THE BAPTISTS, THEY MUST HAVE OPPOSED THE REFORMATION.

We might dwell upon this singular position of the American Bible Society, but our space forbids us to detail the fearful inferences which every reflecting mind will itself conceive. One idea only we cannot forbear to insert. The managers, according to their circular, must have replied to an application from the great Reformer for aid in publishing his version, "We cannot conscientiously aid a version which is so unfaithful as to translate βαπτίζω immerse, but if you will publish a version founded on the Latin Vulgate, although it may inculcate '*penance*,' instead of '*repentance*,' and the worship of an image on the top of a staff, we will freely communicate of our means to circulate a version which has such mere '*defects*.' "

But the inconsistencies of this statement of the managers appear in other respects. They assert that the German and Dutch tongues have undergone an important change, while they furnish no account of the mode by which it has been effected, or any authority on which their assertion is founded. It would be easy to show from the use of the disputed words in German and Dutch writers, and from the letters of Mr. Oncken, whose acquaintance with the language of the common people, and whose uncorrupt integrity have never been disputed, that the assertion of the managers is *totally incorrect and unfounded*. We acquit them however of any design to misstate. They have probably taken the word of the individual who wrote the circular for a fact, of which they have neglected to obtain the proofs.

For other inconsistencies of this statement, and the unpleasant dilemma in which it involves the managers, we refer the reader to a former part of this argument in which the subject was partially examined.\*

The versions in India are admitted to be "in the main good," and if they should "undergo a similar change as to the import of a few words," "the managers will patronize them."

This is another most important admission. Our versions are in the main good—that is, with the exception of these few words, βαπτίζω and its cognates, they are good. Alas! can Christians confess this and yet refuse them to the perishing heathen? Are not the Burmans and the Karens, and the Bengalese as important in the eye of Jehovah as the inhabitants of Europe? Can the Managers conscientiously bestow as high commendations upon the Romanist versions as they can on the Baptist? Then where is the consistency of circulating the former among the inhabitants of Europe and withholding the latter from the natives of India? Is the immersion of a believer in Jesus a more fearful crime with the Managers of the American Bible Society than the worship of an image? We know no illustration of such conduct more striking than the expression of Scripture, "to strain at a gnat and swallow a camel."

But the Managers assure us that the objectionable words in the German and Dutch tongues have lost their peculiar, and acquired a general meaning, and they seem to anticipate that the same may eventually be the case with our Indian versions. If the statement were really true, and the

\* See pages 55, 56.

anticipations well founded, must the poor heathen die by millions in the meanwhile without the word of God, anticipating that some distant generation may receive it from the patronage of the American Bible Society? If the words are to undergo such a change of meaning, why not circulate the Scriptures generally, as is the case with Luther's version in Germany, and bring about the result as soon as possible? If those who sprinkle, could use Luther's version in Germany when, even according to the Managers, it *did* inculcate immersion, cannot Baptists be permitted to use a similar version in India?

In closing our remarks upon this paragraph, we cannot forbear to remark the apparently light manner in which the Managers speak of withholding the Scriptures from the heathen. No other versions existed in the languages of some of the many millions who were ready to receive the versions in question. Yet for the sake of "a few words," as the Managers inform us, they refuse to circulate our versions. Nay, for the sake of these *few words* they effectually break the bands of union, and give occasion to bitter feelings and unchristian remarks to hundreds of thousands of professing christians whom they have arrayed against each other. *They* were not impelled to their course by conscientious scruples, for if expediency prompted them to circulate the Romanist versions, conscience could not have prevented them from circulating the Baptist. For "a few words," then, a light matter with them not involving conscience, they have adopted a line of policy, which, we candidly believe, will be more disastrous to them in its ultimate results than any other course, which, under the circumstances of the case, they could possibly have followed.

*“Fifthly—Another charge is, that the Managers have set up the English Bible as a standard to which all translations must be conformed, thus abridging the liberty of the translator.*

“This is a mistake, as any reader of the foregoing resolution will see. It is expected that missionaries, or others, who prepare new versions, will translate as they do in fact, from the original tongues with great care, imitating the English no farther than by transferring a few words, which either cannot be translated or are of disputed meaning; and even these transfers are not required, provided the various members of the Society can unite in using the versions as they use the English. This certainly is imposing no severe restraint on the conscience of the translator, far less, it is apprehended, than the complainants (who have taken the English Bible, and appended to it a glossary, telling us *precisely* what certain Greek words signify) will require of their translators. How much liberty will the latter have to prepare versions which are not *thoroughly* denominational?”

The legitimate application of a general rule is not confined to the particular case which called it into existence. In their anxiety to avoid any expression that might give the Christian public an explicit idea of the nature of the controversy which they had started with the Baptists, the Managers of the American Bible Society have adopted a rule as general in its extent, as it is perpetual in its operation. We admit that their original design was only to coerce the Baptist translators, but the foundation which they have laid, is far too broad for so narrow a superstructure.

*“Resolved, That in appropriating money for the translating, printing or distributing the sacred Scriptures in foreign languages, the Managers feel at liberty to encourage only such versions as conform in the principles of their translations to the common English version, at least so far*



as that all the religious denominations represented in this Society can consistently use and circulate said versions in their several schools and communities."

The versions here explicitly described as henceforth entitled to the patronage of the Society, are, "only such as conform to the principles of the English version." This is the general rule by which the Managers design to be guided. But as almost every general rule is expected to have individual exceptions, the most particular care is taken to guard against any expectations of leniency with regard to certain translations. "AT LEAST" these will be excluded from any hopes of patronage.

Conformity to "the common English versions," is thus made the *general* rule, to which the Managers seem to intimate that some exceptions may *possibly* be allowed. The exceptions, however, they do not specify while they establish the rule. Such conformity to this version as to meet the views of "all the religious denominations represented in the Society," is the *universal* rule, to which no exception under any circumstances is to be admitted. "At least" this will be enforced. As though the Managers had said, "We are not yet prepared to say how far we shall enforce the general rule of conformity to the English version, but on this we are decided. If the representative of any denomination takes exception to any version which is not perfectly conformed to the English, that version we will unceremoniously reject. Still as we shall "AT LEAST" do this, we *may* reject for any want of conformity to the English Bible. If then you wish to be safe, you will in all your versions conform entirely to the standard which we have given you."

This is, we conceive, the only legitimate construction of

the resolution which was adopted "after more than six months of candid deliberation." To surmise that a body of intelligent men could not in six months mature a resolution that expressed their design, would be an imputation on their wisdom, of which we shall not be guilty. The language employed by them is not recondite. The expression "at least" is common, and has a definite and fixed meaning. It implies that some proposition has been stated which is general in its nature, and that a particular proposition follows embracing a portion of the ground covered by the general one, and assuring us that, to this portion there is no exception. Still the minor proposition does not in the least invalidate the general one, although it implies a possibility of exceptions to it. We, therefore, assert that the general rule adopted by the Managers of the American Bible Society is,

"To encourage only such versions as conform in the principles of their translations to the common English version."

If this is not to "set up the English Bible as a standard to which all translations must be conformed, thus abridging the liberty of the translator," we would be gratified to have the difference of the propositions distinctly explained.

It may answer a temporary purpose to assert that the identity of the purport of these propositions, "is a mistake," but until some evidence or argument is advanced to *prove* such mistake, reasonable men will probably be unable to discriminate between them.

"It is expected that missionaries, or others, who prepare new versions, will translate, as they do in fact, from the original tongues with great care, imitating the English no farther than by transferring a few words, which either cannot be translated or are of disput-

ed meaning ; and even these transfers are not required, provided the various members of the Society can unite in using the versions as they use the English."

That such expectation is asserted or implied in the resolutions of the Board, we positively deny. No allusion is made to the "original tongues;" no encouragement is given to "great care" concerning them; nothing is said about "transferring a few words."

If the Board of Managers have really enforced or implied any requisitions of the kind, why not quote the words in which they are couched? When a law is issued, "it is expected" that those whom it concerns will regard it. The law issued to translators is, to "conform in the principles of their translations to the common English versions;" and now after it has been four years in force, the Managers inform us that "it is expected, that missionaries, or others, who prepare new versions, will translate, as they do in fact, from the original tongues with great care." Surely the law issued regarding the matter, is little adapted to encourage such expectations.

They are also "expected" to imitate "the English no farther than by transferring a few words," &c. Either then the "missionaries or others who prepare new versions" are not "expected" to comply with the wishes of the Board, or else, to "conform in the principles of translation to the English version," is in the opinion of the Managers, only "to transfer a few words which either cannot be translated, or are of a doubtful meaning." We will not believe that the Managers after six months deliberation, adopted a resolution which they did not expect to be observed, and we are, therefore, obliged however reluc-

tantly, to adopt the latter proposition. We say "reluctantly," for we are reluctant to admit, that wise men, after mature deliberation, should, to express such a simple idea, employ phraseology which does not convey it, but, instead of it, conveys ideas of the utmost magnitude and fearfulness.

But now let us examine the commentary of the Managers on their own resolution. There can be no dispute regarding words, such as proper names, &c., which cannot be translated. To deliberate six months before preparing a resolution to require translators "to imitate the English by transferring a few words which cannot be translated," would be below the dignity of the Board of Managers. A translator would naturally inquire, "What else did you imagine that I would do with such words? If I could not translate them, did you fear that I would omit them?" It is perfectly evident, notwithstanding their own commentary, that the Managers never intended any such trifling, as to resolve that a man should do that which he could not avoid.

The commentary must then be abbreviated. To conform in the principles of translation to the common English version, is, in the opinion of the Managers, to transfer a few words of disputed meaning. A version founded on no other principle (we cannot find a plural in the idea) than the transfer of a few words of disputed meaning, is certainly not entitled to much commendation, and least of all deserves to be made a standard. Still those "few words" may be of so great importance, that although the transfer of them may not constitute such a prominent excellence as to be justly called "the principles" of its translation, yet it may possibly constitute a most material de-

fect. If a chapter of the Bible were left untranslated, and printed in a modern version as it appears in the original Hebrew or Greek, this would not properly be regarded as "the principles" of the translation of the book, but it would constitute in the eyes of a man who conscientiously desired to give the whole of divine truth to the people that received that version a most lamentable and unpardonable blemish in the work.

But the Managers are sincerely desirous, as appears by this and the foregoing paragraph, to convince the readers of their circular that they require very little of the Baptists. We as sincerely believe their professions. They require what to them appears *a very small matter*. They have always assured us that they regard it as of little importance whether a man be immersed or sprinkled. On the other hand *we* make of it a matter of conscience. They speak of the transfer of a few words as a mere matter of expediency. We again regard this as a matter of conscience. We cannot question whether we shall or shall not give the *whole* word of God to the heathen so far as human ability will permit. Money, union, expediency and all other considerations must bow before conscience. Such being the state of the question, is it right, is it Christian, is it expedient, for those who regard the matter as light and small, to press their views to the cutting off of those who attach to it the highest importance? This view of the subject opens a field of inferences, to which, without too far extending this examination, we cannot even allude.

In justification of their conduct, the Managers at the close of this paragraph allude to a measure of the American and Foreign Bible Society, and from that infer positively and explicitly the course which that Society "will

require of their translators." They further assume that the Society alluded to, are "the complainants." In all this there is a want of dignity and propriety which must strike every unbiassed mind. Let us for a moment imagine that the inference of the Managers is well founded ; to what will it amount ? A Board to whom are intrusted the interests of a large and respectable Society, is explaining to its constituents its reasons for adopting a line of policy which involves numerous inconsistencies, and repelling certain charges in relation to that policy. Instead of disproving these charges by a manly course of reasoning, the Board infers, or imagines that another society will do as badly or worse in similar matters. And then to bind this strange reasoning to the case in hand, the Board alleges, that this Society, of which it has not even given the name, constitutes "the complainants."

To such reasoning we are almost at a loss for an answer. What in the name of logic has the American and Foreign Bible Society to do with the question whether the American Bible Society has done right or wrong ?

The Managers of the American cannot have founded their action on that of the American and Foreign as the former had acted before the latter was called into existence.

Again, to call the latter "the complainants," when the "charges" which the Managers are endeavouring to rebuke, have been put forth in almost every case by individuals and on their private authority, is ungenerous as it is unjust.

But the inference or surmise of the Managers, which we have hitherto treated as well founded, is in reality totally destitute of foundation. The English Bibles and

Testaments issued by the American and Foreign Bible Society, are, as nearly as practicable, an accurate reprint of the original edition of the present English version.—On a fly leaf preceding the New Testament, *seven* words are printed with the Greek corresponding to them, and the proper meaning of those words given by a single English synonyme. The whole if formed into a sentence, would make about the length of a common verse of Scripture. *This* is the important matter which is magnified by the Managers of the American Bible Society into a GLOSSARY! Were it not for the great respect which we really entertain towards these gentlemen, and the belief that they have acted in this matter without due consideration, we would hardly have condescended to notice such an attack. But what shall we say of the inference deduced from this *glossary*—that the American and Foreign Bible Society will impose far more severe “restraint on the conscience of the translator” than has been imposed by the Managers of the American! Those who can discern the connexion between *the fact* and *the inference*, may also discover the proper method of rebutting the latter. As we have, after the closest study, found ourselves incapable of effecting the former we shall not attempt the latter enterprise.

We have now reached the last matter treated in the circular of the Managers—the amount of moneys contributed by the Baptists to the American Bible Society, and the disposition which ought to have been made of such funds. It would be in vain for us to attempt to disguise the feelings of repugnance with which we enter upon the discussion of such a subject. The questions connected with it do not properly affect the merits of the controversy

arising out of the stand taken by the American Bible Society relative to Baptist versions of the Holy Scriptures. If it could be sustained by the Board of Managers, that they had pursued an invariable policy regarding foreign translations from the foundation of the Society, and that this policy is required by their Constitution and the address of the Convention that formed the Society, they would not be bound by any principle of law or equity to dispose of funds contributed without condition, otherwise than as their Constitution prescribed; of course, not to return them to the donors or give them to another Society. On the other hand, if the Managers have adopted a new line of policy, not required by the Constitution or address, but antagonist to principles contained in one of those documents, and contrary to their previous course of action—a policy which excludes a portion of the donors from the justly expected benefits of their donations—the duty of the Managers is evidently to retrace their steps, rescind their resolutions, abandon their new line of policy, and resume harmonious action with those whom they have disaffected. If indeed insuperable obstacles to the professed and established constitutional action of a Society occur, it may then be proper to disorganize and divide the funds, and reorganize upon different principles. Such an emergency no one professes to have discovered, and we think that we have proved in the preceding articles that the true state of the case is one which requires the Managers to return to the policy which for twenty years they pursued with satisfaction to all their constituents.

Under these circumstances we should not on the present occasion allude to the amount of funds contributed by Baptists to the American Bible Society, had not more



than one quarter of the circular of the Managers been devoted to an earnest endeavour to show how small a sum had really been received from our denomination. We do not mean to censure them for this attempt, although we do not admire the manner in which it has been prosecuted.

Where a difference of opinion exists regarding monetary calculations, we believe that it is not customary for one party alone to examine the books, and publish a statement founded upon them, without extending an invitation for some person or persons interested for the other party to be present. The propriety of such an invitation we imagine to be most manifest, especially when the accuracy of the supposed calculations depends upon a knowledge of numerous names and persons with whom the second party can alone be believed to be acquainted. In the present instance, the difficulties attending a contrary course of procedure, appear to have been felt by the Managers.

“In relation to Life Members, it is not easy to determine the precise number belonging to the Baptist persuasion. In looking over a list of more than 4,000 names, not more than about 100 can be thus identified, while several of these were constituted members by those of other creeds, and several more are still friendly to the Society. But allowing there were 150 Life Members, each of which has contributed \$30, the total would amount to no more than \$4,500, to be added to \$600 for Life Directorships.”

On the other hand the Rev. B. M. Hill, a resident of this city when the circular of the Managers was published, had from personal examination of the Reports from 1829 to 1836, ascertained that there were “at least” “46 laymen and female Life Members, by the payment of \$1665:

and 140 clerical Life Members, by the payment of \$5260 all of whom are Baptists."

This information has been frequently published and was in the possession of the Managers when they issued the circular; yet they have not availed themselves of any opportunity of testing its accuracy, nor that of their own, by inviting the aid of persons extensively acquainted with the names and doings of Baptists, while preparing their statement.

We may add, that the list of names of Life Members marked by Mr. Hill as Baptists, has been examined by several of the oldest and most intelligent Baptist ministers in the United States, and by them is regarded as correct so far as it extends. It would be improper not to add, that the apprehended deficiency consists in the *omission* of names of persons, who, from lapse of time and other circumstances, cannot be *with certainty* designated as Baptists. A perfect list would probably much increase the number of Baptist Life Members.

The same reasoning applies to Life Directors. The Managers can out of 400 find only four from contributions by Baptists. Mr. Hill has found at least ten, and adds,

"While upon this subject it may not be amiss for me to remark that, while the above proves the incorrectness of the assertion that 'there is only *one* Baptist minister a Life Director,' it is only true in part that the one alluded to, was constituted such by a Presbyterian elder. That minister was a Life Member by the payment of \$30, but the Presbyterian elder subsequently made a large donation to the Society, and availed himself of the constitutional privilege of nominating a number of his personal friends as Life Directors and Members; of this number the minis-

ter in question was one, by the addition of \$120 to the previous subscription. Here, also, I think proper to notice an assertion that one person, at least, has been very forward to use as an argument to prove the unprofitableness of the Baptists as 'partners in the joint concern' of the American Bible Society, that is, that they have but few names on the list of directors and members. Now, those lists are swelled to a great length with names which appear there, not always upon the credit of their own subscriptions, but of large donations or legacies of other individuals. One instance of which I have named, and I could name others. Indeed, but few such donations have been made by Pædo-baptists without claiming the utmost privilege of that sort to which they were entitled; while on the other hand, the Baptists, who either did not understand the advantage of such things, or were entirely indifferent to them, gave their money readily, without seeking any other benefit by it than that of blessing the world with the word of God. I know of nearly \$20,000 being contributed by Baptists in heavy sums, who so far as I can learn, did not confer the privilege of directorship or membership upon a single person. And the church of which the minister just alluded to, is pastor,\* has contributed to the funds

\* S. H. Cone, Pastor of the Oliver-street Baptist church, New-York, is the individual thus distinguished; and the \$120 were paid by Arthur Tappan, Esq. As the mild and candid correspondent of the Troy Morning Mail has thought proper to bring this subject before the public, we have deemed it due to truth and justice to state the following facts: In 1830, a legacy of \$7,000, left by John Withington, a Deacon of Oliver-street church, was paid to the treasurer of the American Bible Society. In 1833, a legacy of \$300 to the same Society, was bequeathed by Mrs. Abijah

of the Society enough to constitute him and many others; Life Directors, if they had chosen to do so. Therefore, although I have shown that the Baptists present a respectable number of names whom I recognise as enjoying the privilege spoken of, (and I presume there are many more whose names I never heard,) yet, had the liberal benefactors to whom I have alluded, chosen to avail themselves of the constitutional right of nominating, the Baptist list of directors and members would have outnumbered those of any other denomination."

We shall not go through with the estimates made by Mr. Hill, although from extensive correspondence on the subject since the commencement of these articles, we are convinced that in placing the sum total of Baptist contributions at \$100,000, he has confined himself very far within the true amount. A strong argument against Baptist liberality has been constructed by the Managers from the fact, that only one of our denomination contributed *for the*

Marshall, a member of the same church. From 1830 to 1835 inclusive, the Oliver-street Female Bible Society, being a branch of the New-York Female Bible Society, auxiliary to the American Bible Society, paid in like manner \$786 72. This sum was of course credited to the New-York Female Bible Society, and Pædo-baptists, at a distance, would never dream that the money had been given by Baptists. This is a single instance of Baptist co-operation with the American Bible Society in former years. How many similar cases exist, we have not the means of ascertaining; but enough is certainly known to convince every unprejudiced mind, that the *single Baptist minister in question* might have enjoyed the honour of being Life Director of the American Bible Society, without the intervention of foreign aid; and that all insinuations about Baptists being "unprofitable partners in the joint concern," are too vague and unfounded to be safely reiterated.

*building* erected by the Bible Society. No allusion is made, however, to a fact equally important to this view of the case, that Baptists are almost universally opposed to this kind of endowment of voluntary societies. Our Foreign Mission, Home Mission, American and Foreign Bible, and our Publication Societies are all destitute of such endowments. We design to express no opinion upon the propriety or expediency of such views, but we state well known facts, that Baptists in this country conduct their most efficient Societies without the possession of buildings, and that they entertain strong objections against the endowment of voluntary institutions by the possession of any kind of permanent funds.

While, as we have stated, there is sufficient evidence that the contributions of Baptists have amounted to more than \$100,000, it must be borne in mind that in many parts of the country, the Baptists constituted one third, and in some, as in Chenango county, of this state, and in Beaufort District, S. C., more than one half of the supporters of the American Bible Society; yet it was a principle invariably observed by them, to denominate no auxiliary even when, as in some instances, composed wholly of Baptists, by a denominational title.

It must be obvious to all who reflect upon the matter, that sufficient information concerning the contributions of Baptists, to enable a person to form correct estimates, could not be procured from Pædo-baptists alone. If the question were asked, how much have Presbyterians contributed to the American Bible Society, there would be a manifest impropriety in requesting Baptists alone to point out who among the contributors were Presbyterians, and what proportion they gave in certain districts, and then

to publish the result to the world as the sum of Presbyterian benefactions. Yet in the present instance, from all our inquiries upon the subject, we cannot ascertain that a single Baptist has been applied to for information which never could have been procured from Pædo-baptists.

Of the \$100,000 supposed by Mr. Hill to have been contributed by Baptists, from forty to fifty thousand were included in legacies. The Managers admit \$18,000 in the following words :

“ The aggregate of legacies received from Baptists, so far as known to the Board, is no more than \$18,000 ; namely, from the estate of John Fleetwood Marsh, deceased, of Eastchester, New-York, \$10,000 ; from that of John Withington, of New-York, \$7,000 ; and from that of Josiah Penfield, of Georgia, \$1,000.

Of the rest of the sum they thus dispose.

“ But it is said that although the \$40,000 or 50,000 of legacies spoken of as *furnished* to the Society may not as yet be actually paid over, still that sum will be paid from the residuum of the estate of Mr. Marsh, according to the provisions of his will. The American Bible Society, it is true, is one of the residuary legatees of said estate. How far there is a prospect of any speedy avails from this quarter will be seen after reading the following letter from the executor. This letter was procured in consequence of a statement in the Baptist Advocate in relation to this residuum, that “ a simple legal process is alone necessary to transfer it to their (American Bible Society’s) coffers—a process which the Board can at its own option pursue.”

“ HACKENSACK, 18th Jan. 1840.

“ DEAR SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 15th instant, respecting information of the present condition of the legacy left by the late Mr. Marsh to the American Bible Society, I have to state that by the will of Mr. Marsh, the Society, in addition to the lega-

cy of \$10,000 which has been paid, are residuary legatees in common with the grand-children and their children of the eight uncles of the testator, the Society to receive one-third—the aforesaid children the other two-thirds. The residuary legatees are very numerous, and scattered throughout England. We have ascertained about one hundred, and, from information received, there are at least as many more whose names we have not been able to ascertain. Proceedings have been instituted in the Court of Chancery to have the estate settled, but from various causes it has not been brought to a close, and when it will be, it is impossible for me to say. I am advised that I cannot safely pay any of the residuary legatees without having them all brought, in some way, into court, so as to be bound by a decree, in order to a final settlement of the estate.

Very respectfully, yours, &c.

JAMES HAGUE."

We have the testimony of Mr. Hague to different individuals, that the portion of the residuum thus coming to the American Bible Society was, several years ago, not less than \$25,000, and we know that at the compound interest which by skilful management it draws, the present amount is more than \$30,000. Here, so far as it can affect the argument, the matter might be left, since the legacy is as much a bequest of a Baptist to the American Bible Society as though the money had been actually received and were already expended. But as the Managers make an important point of the fact that the money has not yet been paid over, it becomes us to look at Mr. Hague's note. The first part of it is founded upon the will. One third of the residuum of the property is to be paid to the Society. The specific legacies have been paid and the residuum is in the executor's hands. No clause in the will prevents him from paying the residuary lega-

tees so soon as he can ascertain the amount to which they are legally entitled. It must be evident at a glance that the share of the Society is not in the least affected by the number of the other residuary legatees. There may be one or there may be ten thousand of the latter, and still the Society's share would be in either case precisely one third of the whole amount now in the executor's hands. It is true that he may require a bond of indemnity from the Society before paying over the money, but it is equally true that in the case of John Withington a similar bond was demanded and freely given. It is also true that Mr. Hague has said on more than one occasion, as we have been informed, that he is prepared to pay over the money whenever such bond is given.

We here leave this painful subject, and with it we terminate our remarks upon the circular.

It was our original design to sum up the facts and arguments which we have adduced to disprove the statements and confute the reasoning of the Managers, but we fear to trespass so much on the patience of our readers. Enough has been said to convince every candid person that the late policy of the American Bible Society towards the Baptists is unjustifiable, and that the course of reasoning by which the Managers have endeavoured to sustain it, is unsound in argument and incorrect in matters of fact.

Such is the history of the events which produced the separation between the American Bible Society and the Baptists. The latter had for nearly twenty years cordially co-operated with other evangelical denominations in the dissemination of the lively oracles of God. They wished no separation; they sought it not. They adopted



no new line of policy ; they propagated no novel doctrine ; they changed no existing relation. Yet in the midst of apparent prosperity, when the coffers of the American Bible Society were overflowing, and new fields of usefulness were eagerly sought for the disbursement of rapidly increasing means, the Baptists were cut off from participation in the funds. The measure was adopted in a season of profound peace, when, more than at any preceding period, evangelical denominations in this country were united in benevolent action. It was adopted, not only without provocation on our part, but against our most earnest protestations. It was adopted in view of the heathen perishing for lack of knowledge, and in the face of an infidel world ready to rejoice at dissension among professing christians.

The American Bible Society is no longer what it was. It once towered majestically, a pyramid of christian benevolence. Firm in the strength of its impartiality and its disinterestedness, it bid fair to withstand for centuries the varying winds of denominational feeling, or even the fierce storms of sectarian persecution. It feared no danger from enemies.

But in a moment of profound calm, its professed friends, *the very guard entrusted with its defence*, have loosed and thrown out from the base one of the massive stones that sustained the immense superstructure ; and it now stands—a still towering fabric—but *mutilated, disfigured, and weakened*.

## APPENDIX.

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IN preparing the present volume for the press, we had designed to compile a tabular view of the rendering of βαπτίζω in ancient and modern versions of the Scriptures, and had secured the promise of friends to assist in the undertaking. In the mean while the pamphlet, the title page of which is given below has made its appearance, and covers nearly the whole ground. It is written by an Episcopalian, and therefore cannot be suspected of an undue bias towards Baptist views.

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*A Critical examination of the rendering of the word βαπτίζω in the ancient and many of the modern versions of the New Testament, with especial reference to Dr. Henderson's animadversions upon Mr. Greenfield's statements on the subject. By F. W. Gotch, A. B., Trinity College, Dublin. London: Thomas Ward & Co. Paternoster Row.*

### PREFACE.

IN laying before the Public this little work, the author is well aware that he exposes himself to the charge of having spent more labour upon a matter of verbal criticism, and that too relating to a ritual observance, than was warranted by the importance of the subject.

To anticipate such a charge may not prevent its being made: yet, as it is not likely that the writer will have any other opportunity of justifying himself, he may be allowed

to observe, that whilst fully admitting the small importance of his subject, compared with those which involve the very spirit and life of the gospel, he yet cannot regard it an unimportant thing to ascertain the truth in any matter connected with the standing laws of Christ's kingdom.

The translations of the New Testament now made for infant churches will probably exercise a powerful and enduring influence on the future developement of Christianity in heathen lands. No effort, therefore, to render these versions as perfect as the limits of human knowledge will permit, even in respect to subjects of secondary importance, can properly be looked upon as superfluous labour.

Those who are most aware of the difficulty of attaining perfect accuracy where various languages are used, will, he feels assured, not only be most ready to pardon blemishes, but to give credit to the printer for the beauty of the foreign type, and the correctness with which it is employed.

BOXMOOR, HERTS, *January, 1841.*

#### CRITICAL EXAMINATION.

In the course of the controversy which has for the last few years been carried on respecting the mode of translating the words which designate the ordinance of Christian Baptism, appeals have been confidently made, by both parties, to the general practice of former, and especially of ancient translators. It has been affirmed, on the one hand, that the method adopted by the Baptist Missionaries is altogether an innovation; and, on the other, that it is sanctioned by a great majority of the ancient, and by many of the modern versions.

In order to ascertain the truth between these conflicting statements, it seems desirable that the question should be taken up simply as one of criticism, and that we should examine *de novo* the versions which have been appealed to. The following pages contain an attempt at such an

examination. It has been undertaken from no love of controversy, nor from any desire to support or vindicate, by an *ex-parte* statement, the movements of any particular section of the Christian church. It has originated in the desire of the author, first of all to ascertain for himself the truth; and then, as far as he is able, to give to others the means of forming a correct judgment on a subject of no small importance in itself; but of much more in its consequences, as it bears upon the general question of the manner in which translations should be made.

It should be distinctly understood, that it forms no part of the present design to inquire into the meaning of the Greek word βαπτίζω: the only point to which the author's attention is directed, is, How is this word rendered by translators.

The results to which this investigation leads will be more properly stated at the close of it. To refer to them now, would only be to prejudice the minds of readers for or against the statements made, according to their previous predilections. It seems desirable, however, before we enter on the examination of particular versions, that we should glance at the critical inquiries which have been already made on the subject.

Robinson, in his History of Baptism, appeals frequently to the authority of versions. His notices, however, are not only scattered, but, in general, very cursory. The first occasion of any thing like a critical examination of the words employed in the versions appears to have been the attack made upon the Serampore Mahratta Version of the New Testament, in the Asiatic Journal for September, 1829. It was there brought as a charge against Dr. Carey and his colleagues, that they had "rendered to 'baptize' by a phrase compounded contrary to the idiom of the

language, but which can signify nothing else than *to give a dipping or immersion*." The late amiable and lamented Mr. Greenfield, in his defence of that version, met this charge on the grounds that the phrase was idiomatic; that it was a correct rendering of the word βαπτίζω; and that to render it by a term signifying *immerse*, was in accordance with established usage. It is to this last point only that our attention is now directed. "It may be safely affirmed," says Mr. Greenfield, "that many of the most accurate and valuable versions, both ancient and modern, are involved in the same accusation, and that there is no one which is directly hostile to that interpretation." (p. 40.) And he adds: "In consistency, if that aid" (*i. e.* of the British and Foreign Bible Society) "be withdrawn from the Serampore Missionaries because they have rendered βαπτίζω to *immerse*, then must it also be withdrawn from the Churches of Syria, of Arabia, of Abyssinia, of Egypt, of Germany, of Holland, of Denmark, &c.; and the venerable Peshito Syriac Version, the Arabic Versions of the Propaganda, of Sabat, &c., the Ethiopian, the Coptic, and other versions must all be suppressed" (p. 44). These statements were supported by an examination of the terms employed in the versions referred to.

The account Mr. Greenfield gave of the versions met an immediate denial, in a critique originally published in the Congregational Magazine for March, 1830. This critique has, owing to recent controversy, been acknowledged, and the part relating to this question reprinted, by Dr. Henderson, in "a Letter to the Rev. A. Brandram, M. A., on the meaning of the word βαπτίζω, and the manner in which it has been rendered in versions sanctioned by the Bible Society." Dr. Henderson undertakes to prove, that in none of the versions mentioned by Mr. Greenfield, except

perhaps the Gothic, does the term used for βαπτίζω signify *to immerse*. "In his appeal to the versions," says Dr. Henderson, "we cannot but deem Mr Greenfield peculiarly unfortunate" (p. 10;) and he proceeds to support his view by a re-examination of several of the versions under consideration.

An examination of three of the Eastern Versions (viz. Syriac, Ethiopian, and Coptic) is also contained in a pamphlet relating to the present discussion, entitled "The Bible Translation Society of the Baptists uncalled for and injurious. By a Baptist. London, 1840."

The only other work in English,\* bearing upon the subject, with which the author is acquainted, is, "A Review of Professor Stuart on Christian Baptism, by the Rev. Willard Judd: New-York, 1836;" where, in an Appendix of sixteen closely-printed pages, the results of an examination of a very extensive list of versions, ancient and modern, are given.

None of these examinations appear to the author satisfactory. The last mentioned is the most extensive; but Mr. Judd's statements are very brief, and not always correct as to the facts. Mr. Greenfield's examination was undertaken with a particular object in view, to which he has closely confined himself; and he therefore is altogether silent respecting several of the ancient versions. The same remark applies to Dr. Henderson, who wrote in answer merely to Greenfield. The authorities adduced by both Greenfield and Judd are almost entirely the Lexicons: in quoting from which, it should be remarked, however, the former gives many passages in which the words

\* Augusti has some remarks on the versions of βαπτίζω, in his "*Handbuch der christlichen Archæologie*," to which subsequent reference will be made.

occur. Dr. Henderson, on the other hand, distrusts the authority of the Lexicons; but he seldom gives other authority, by distinctly quoting the passages in which the words occur in the senses which he affixes to them.


It will be seen, in the course of the ensuing pages, that the author refers to Dr. Henderson's pamphlet more frequently than to any other of those mentioned, and that he has the misfortune to differ from him in many of his statements; yet he has not thought it needful directly to reply to all that he conceives to be erroneous in Dr. Henderson's remarks, much less to confine himself to those versions which have been the subject of controversy between him and Mr. Greenfield. His object is, throughout, a general and, if possible, and impartial examination of the question; assuming as little the air of controversy as is practicable on a subject that has been so long a matter of debate.


## S Y R I A C .

The New Testament was very early translated into the Syriac language. The Peshito Syriac Version is generally referred to the beginning of the second century: by some critics, even to the close of the first. The Philoxenian Version, made under the authority of Philoxenus, or Xenayas, bishop of Hierapolis, is to be referred to the beginning of the sixth century. Fragments of another version, which has been called Pakestino-Syriac, have been discovered in the Library of the Vatican; and the manuscript containing them has been partially collated, but not printed.

Our examination properly commences with the venerable Peshito Version. It is considered to be the earliest version extant: the language differs, probably, very little

from that spoken by our Lord and his disciples;\* and besides, with regard to the particular point in question, it may be considered the parent of many other Eastern Versions.

The root which it employs to translate βαπτίζω and its derivatives is uniformly  (*amad.*) Now, in order to ascertain the meaning of this term, which has been the subject of much discussion, we have to consider, in the first place, its etymology, and then its use. It is almost superfluous to say that etymology alone will not suffice. In every language we may find innumerable examples of an entire departure from etymological meaning; and in languages where we have but few works to refer to, we shall find it difficult, frequently impossible, to trace the gradations of meaning, or form any probable conjecture of the process by which the secondary signification was produced.

The word  has been generally, and perhaps correctly referred to the same root as the Hebrew עמד (found also in the Arabic and Ethiopic;) the general

\* Dr. Henderson, with singular infelicity, refers, in a note, to this fact;—"When our Lord," he says, "gave the commission to his disciples to baptize all nations, there is every reason to believe that he employed the identical word found in the Peshito Syriac Version" (p. 11;) the meaning of which he affirms to be, '*to stand up*,' '*stand erect*.' Yet this word is translated (for it must be deemed translation, if the Syriac be the original term) into Greek by βαπτίζω. Does the Greek term, then, ever mean '*to stand up*,' or '*stand erect*?' or, were the writers of the New Testament so little acquainted with Greek as uniformly to substitute βαπτίζω for a word with this signification? Unless Dr. Henderson is willing to acknowledge a mistranslation, in this instance, on the part of inspired men, he must acknowledge that the meaning he has given to the word is not its true one. It is not that which they gave it.



meaning of which is, undoubtedly, ‘*to stand.*’ In the Syriac, however, I am not aware of any instance in which the verb has such a meaning, or any of the words which are apparently derived from it, except ܕܡܢܬܐ *a pillar or column.*\* Dr. Henderson indeed asserts, that the verb, “like its cognate עמד in Hebrew, signifies, ‘*to stand up,*’ ‘*stand erect;*’† but he gives no quotation to authorize such a meaning; and Michaelis‡ expressly states that he does not find in the Syriac the signification of *standing* which is common to the other Oriental languages, unless it be in the derivative above mentioned.

Another derivation therefore, as is well known, has been proposed by Michaelis, and certainly not without plausibility. He derived the Syriac word from the Arabic غَمَت (*ghamata*), which signifies *to immerse*, instead of عَمَدَ (*amada*.) The changes of the letters would furnish but little difficulty. The Arabic alphabet is so much more

\* The writer of the Letters on the “Bible Translation Society of the Baptists” speaks of “*derivatives of the Syriac* ܕܡܢܬܐ occurring “in two places, 1 Tim. iii. 15. and Gal. ii. 9., *both meaning columns or pillars.*” It is somewhat unusual to speak of the singular and plural of a noun (as is the case here) as two derivatives of the same root. This noun also occurs in Rev. iii. 12. and x. 1.

† P. 10. The signification of the Hebrew is not emphatically *stand up* or *erect*, as Dr. Henderson’s statement implies. That it may occasionally be so rendered with propriety, is not denied; but it cannot be always, nor indeed frequently. A reference to any Lexicon will show that the idea of *erectness* of posture is no part of the radical meaning of the word. See 2 Chron. vi. 13, where it is said that Solomon “stood, and kneeled down upon his knees.”

‡ Lexicon Syriacum sub voce.

copious than the Hebrew or the Syriac, that roots which in that language are distinct are frequently confounded in the others. As an example of this amalgamation of two roots, in respect to the letters ع (Ain) and غ (Ghain,) the root

צבע Heb., <sup>ܥܒܥ</sup> Syr., may be mentioned. The verb

<sup>ܥܒܥ</sup> means to *immerse*; the noun <sup>ܥܒܥܐ</sup> (Heb. <sup>צבע</sup>) a *finger*, especially the first or index finger. Where is the connexion between the two? The Arabic makes it

clear, by referring the two words to different roots <sup>ܥܒܥ</sup> (tsabaa) “intendit digitum,” whence <sup>ܐܬܨܒܐ</sup> (atsba)

“digitus;” and <sup>ܬܨܒܐ</sup> (tsabagha) “tinxit, immersit.”\*

Indeed, there could be no distinction in Syriac between <sup>ܥ</sup> and <sup>ܓ</sup>. The change of the <sup>ܬ</sup> into the Syriac <sup>ܓ</sup>

is not so easy; yet we know that letters of the same organ are interchangeable; and it seems to have been on this general principle that Michaelis rested, since he gives no example of such a change. Hoffman, in his Syriac Grammar, gives an instance of a precisely similar change in a proper name, “*Artageram* <sup>ܐܪܬܐܓܪܝܡ</sup>, <sup>ܐܪܬܐܓܪܝܡ</sup>, et <sup>ܐܪܬܐܓܪܝܡ</sup> scribunt.”† The difficulty of the hypothesis, however, is this, that the very word exists in Arabic; and is used (as we shall afterwards see) in precisely the same sense as it is in the Syriac, as well as with the meaning of

\* Freytag Lex. Arab. sub voce.

† Hoffmanni Grammat. Syr. p. 123.

*causing to stand, or supporting.* On this account, a derivation from another root seems forced. If it be at all admissible, it must be explained on the supposition of the word already in use among the Syrians having been adopted from them by the Arabian Christians, to express the ordinance of baptism without reference to their own word, from which it had been originally derived. Freytag, in his larger Lexicon, expressly refers to the Syriac as the source from which **عَبَدَ** has acquired the meaning *baptize*. But the fact, if admitted, proves nothing as to the etymology.

Augusti, Professor Stuart, and Dr. Lee agree in taking the primary signification to be '*to stand*;' and deduce the meaning '*baptize*' from it, through the intervention of '*confirm*,' the rite of confirmation being in the Eastern Church connected with baptism. A Rabbinical use of the Hebrew word seems to favour this account. Buxtorf gives, as one meaning of the Hiphil of **עמד**, *constituere*; and quotes from the Rabbinical treatise, Pirke avoth, c. 1. **תלמידים הרבה העמידו** "*constituite discipulos multos.*"\*—This, however, furnishes at best a very precarious ground on which to rest the argument. No instance is adduced of the Syriac word ever meaning to *confirm* or to *initiate*. Augusti's method of explaining why a word signifying '*confirmation*,' rather than one whose proper meaning was the same as the Greek term, should be used, is ingenious. "We may," he says, "regard as the especial ground of choice of this word, the fact, that the Syrian Church could not well take the word '*zaba*' for this purpose, since this had come into misuse and bad report through the Zabians and Hemerobaptists. They

\* Buxtorf. Lex. Rabbin. et Talmud. col. 1622.

hesitated, in particular, to call John the Baptist, according to the custom of his false followers, *Zabo*; but they chose the apparently fit word *Maamdone* (βαπτιστής,) which we find Matt. iii. 1. xi. 11. They chose also the word *Maamudito*; by which could be expressed, not indeed the nature and manner of the rite, but yet the design and effect of the sacred act, in opposition to the antichristian and heretical lustrations.\* No proof, however, is offered by Augusti that the Mendai Jahia, or disciples of John, were in existence at so early a period as that of the Syriac Translation;† and even if this were established, proof would still be required that they had then assumed the designation *Zabians*.‡

\* Augusti *Handbuch der christlichen Archaeologie*, Vol. II. pp 311, 312. Leipzig, 1836.

† The whole history of this sect is very obscure. It was a current opinion amongst German critics, fifty years ago, that their origin was to be traced to some disciples of John the Baptist who did not admit the divine mission of Jesus, and that the Gospel of John was directed against their errors. See Michaelis Introd. Vol. III. ch. 7. § 4, 5. The opinion of their early origin is still maintained, not only by Augusti, but also by Neander, in his *Allgemeine Geschichte der christl. Kirche*, 1 B. p. 646. On the other hand, Knapp (*Scripta Varii Argumenti*, T. I. p. 159,) Tittman (*Melemata Sacra*, p. 15 seqq.,) and other critics, deny that there was any sect of John's disciples in the Apostolic age; and many consider them a Mahometan rather than a Christian sect (Adelung's *Mithridates*, T. I. p. 339.) For authorities relating to them, see Kuinoel Proleg. in *Evang. Joh.* § 5. De Wette *Lehrbuch der hist.-crit. Einleitung in d. N. T.* § 107. b. Credner *Einleitung in d. N. T.* § 100.

‡ Dr. Henderson refers to this sect, under the name Mendai Jahia, in a note (p. 11;) and asserts that they now perform baptism by pouring; using the formula, "I renew thy baptism, in the name of our Father and Saviour John, who in this manner baptized the Jews in Jordan, &c." Dr. Henderson does not give his authority for this statement; and I have in vain sought for confirmation of it.

On the whole, it appears that we can gain little from the etymology of the word; for, first, there is not only no *proof* that the Syriac word is connected etymologically with the same form existing in cognate languages, and having the signification ‘to stand,’ but there are some grounds for suspecting a different origin; and, secondly, if there were such a connexion, it is plain that it is not in that sense that it could be employed as an equivalent for βαπτίζω, and consequently must have acquired a secondary meaning.

We must therefore appeal to the use of the word. On this point the Lexicons are decided. Castel and his editor Michaelis, Buxtorf, and Schaaf, are all unanimous. The first gives the following meanings: “Ablutus est, baptizatus est. *Aphel*, immersit, baptizavit.” Buxtorf gives, “Baptizari, intingi, ablui, abluere se. *Ethp.* Idem. *Aphel*, baptizare.” Schaaf: “Abluit se, ablutus, intinctus, im-


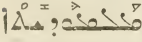
Robinson (History of Baptism, p. 496) says, all are agreed that they administer baptism in rivers by immersion. The German authorities referred to above, though they state nothing precisely as to their mode of performing baptism, all agree in representing them as designated by a word which signifies ‘dippers.’ Their assumption of the name Zabians, at whatever period, invalidates Dr. Henderson’s argument, drawn from what he states to be their present practice. It seems highly improbable that they should at first *pour*, then *immerse*, and now again *pour*. It was indeed formerly said that the name Zabians or Sabæans was given them from their worshipping the host of heaven, צבא. (Sale’s Koran, Prelim. Diss. p. 20.) But it would seem that different sects were confounded, owing to the similarity of their designations: and all recent authorities agree in deriving the designation of the Mendai Jahia from the Syriac word ܒܬܝܢ; the meaning of which Dr. Henderson gives, “to sink, dip, or put under water.” See, in addition to the authors already referred to, Michaelis Lex. Syr. sub voce

ܒܬܝܢ.

mersus in aquam, baptizatus est. *Ethpeel*, Idem quod *Peal*. *Aphel*, immersit, baptizavit." Gutbier, in the small Lexicon affixed to his addition of the Syriac Testament, gives the meanings, "Baptizavit, baptizatus est. *Il. sustentavit*;" but without any reference to support the last meaning, and it is apparently introduced simply for the purpose of deducing from the verb the noun ܰܠܰܡܰܢܰܐ columnna. With this exception, the authority of the Lexicons referred to is altogether against any such meaning as "to stand." Schaaf compares the word with the Hebrew ַמַּדַּת *stetit*, and the Arabic عَمَد *Re altiore, columnna, palo, sustinuit, fulsit, stabilavit, erexit, &c.*, but does not give the slightest hint that any of these meanings are extant in the Syriac verb.

The authority of Lexicons, however, is of small account, unless it can be confirmed by the use of the word. We therefore proceed to an examination of the Syriac Version, and Syrian Authors, on the point in question.

In the Syriac New Testament, the verb ܰܠܰܡܰܢܰܐ occurs eighty times, answering in seventy-nine instances to the verb βαπτίζω, in one (Matt. iii. 7) to the noun βάπτισμα: the noun ܰܠܰܡܰܢܰܐ occurs fifteen times, answering in fourteen instances to βαπτιστής and in one to the participle βαπτίζων: the noun ܰܠܰܡܰܢܰܐ occurs thirty-one times, answering to βάπτισμα in twenty-one instances, to βαπτισμός in four, to φωτισθέντες in two (Heb. vi. 4. and x. 32. where 'being enlightened' is manifestly taken by the translator as a figurative expression for having been baptized in accordance with the well-known usage of the

Fathers;\*) and to *κολυμβήθρα* in four, viz. John v. 2, 4, 7. and ix. 7. The root thus is used, in all, in 126 instances. The Greek verb *βαπτίζω* occurs eighty times, the noun *βαπτιστής* fourteen, *βάπτισμα* twenty-two, and *βαπτισμὸς* four; in all, 120. From this comparison it will be seen, that in every instance where the word *βαπτίζω* or any of its derivatives, is employed in the Greek, some form of the root  is used in the Syriac, and that the noun  (which signifies both *baptism* and *baptistery*) is used where no derivative of *βαπτίζω* is employed; twice as a figurative designation of ‘baptism,’ and four times in a sense connected with the meaning ‘baptistery,’ as the translation of *κολυμβήθρα*, a *pool* or *bathing place*; a use which the noun, signifying the place where baptism was performed, could scarcely have acquired, unless the verb designating the act of baptism had been understood to mean *bathe* or *immerse*. We are, moreover, warranted in concluding, that though the term was peculiarly appropriated to the rite of Christian baptism, as is manifest from its being used as the translation of *φωτισθεντες*, it was nevertheless regarded by the Syriac translator as synonymous with *βαπτίζω* in *all the senses* in which that word is used in the New Testament, and not as simply expressive of the Christian rite: see, *e. g.*, Mark vii. 4. Luke xi. 38. where the word is used in reference to Jewish ablutions. These examples preclude the idea of taking

\* Vid. Suiceri Thesaurus Eccles. sub. voce *φωτίζω*. To obviate the possible objection, which this interpretation may be supposed to furnish to the antiquity of the Syriac Version, it may be remarked, that Michaelis on other grounds supposes that the translation of the Epistle to the Hebrews is of later date than the other parts of the Peshito Version.

one's station *at* or *in* the water, which, according to Dr Henderson, is its meaning; and that of *confirming*, which Augusti and Dr. Lee maintain. The meaning which the translator designed to convey in these passages, was neither of these, but *ablution*. Dr. Henderson's view, or Augusti's may explain how the word came to have this meaning; and many other hypotheses may do the same; but the fact seems clear, that it had acquired in the time of the Syriac translator the meaning which the Lexicons give, "*abluit se.*"

In the Syriac Translation of the Old Testament, which was made about the same time as that of the New, the word ܠܬܝܒ is used in one instance, and signifies 'immersion,' or 'passing through water' (Num. xxxi. 23.) "All that abideth not the fire, ye shall make go through the water." ܕܠܬܝܒܝܢ ܕܡܝܐ "Ye shall *immerse in water.*"

Ephraim Syrus, who lived in the fourth century, uses the word frequently, and, as far as I have been able to discover, always in reference to Christian baptism. In many cases, the connexion in which it stands, implies that he understood by it 'immersion;' as, for example, in a hymn in which he speaks of the spirit and fire visible in different parts of the life of Christ: "Behold the fire and the spirit ܕܡܝܐ ܕܠܬܝܒܝܢ in the river *in* which thou wast baptized \*!" This however might be explained, according to Dr. Henderson's hypothesis, of a "person's taking his station *at* or *in* the water." The following instance, however, is explicit, and seems liable to no such exception. Speaking again of Christ, he says,

\* Assomanni Bibliotheca Orientalis, T. I. p. 191.









east, and dips him in water, ܡܕܒܝܠܐ ܕܐܝܬܐ ܡܕܒܝܠܐ  
 and lays his hand upon his head and says, *Such a one is*  
*baptized* ܡܕܒܝܠܐ ܕܐܝܬܐ in the name of the Father,  
 &c."\* Here ܡܕܒܝܠܐ is evidently considered to be syno-  
 nymous with ܡܕܒܝܠܐ, the meaning of which is, unques-  
 tionably, to be *immersed*.

This examination leads us to a very different conclusion from that of Dr. Henderson, who asserts that "such a sense (viz. of *immersing*) cannot be proved to attach either to the etymology of the word or to its actual use in any part of the New Testament" (p. 10;) and afterwards, that the reader of the Syriac New Testament has only to consult the passages in which baptism is spoken of, and he will find that this ancient and venerable version, so far from yielding any support to the hypothesis that immersion of the body in water is the mode in which John and our Lord's disciples performed that rite, goes, on the contrary, to establish the opinion that it was performed by the application of water to the body in a *standing* posture, such as we find in the ancient representations" (p. 11.) Now, with regard to the etymology of the word, it is readily conceded, that from that, *immerse* cannot be proved to be its meaning. But as respects its use, it has been shown to be absolutely necessary to give some other meaning than that of "*standing*;" and that the meaning which actually is given in the version of the Bible, as well as by Syriac writers, is *immersion* or *ablution*.

It is no answer to this statement, to say, with Dr. Hen-

\* Assemani Bibliotheca Orientalis, It. III. Pt. 2. p. ccxlii.

derson, that “where a word signifying ‘to dip’ is required, the verb employed is not , the verb uniformly used in reference to baptism, but ,” if it has been shown that the meaning of the former word is *immerse*. No one doubts that  has that meaning, but it does not therefore follow that  has not.

The *Philoxenian Syriac* Version does not require a special examination. The same word is used there as in the Peshito, and of course with the same meaning.

## ARABIC.

The Arabic Versions next claim our attention, not on account of their antiquity or critical authority, but because they are, particularly as regards the question under consideration, connected with the Syriac. The history of the early Arabian Versions is very obscure. The first printed edition of the Gospels is that published at Rome in 1590; and the same impression, with another title-page, bearing the date 1619. Michaelis considers that this version must have been long and generally known in Asia; and Marsh refers it to a period not later than the eleventh century. How much earlier it may be, there is no evidence to decide. No Arabic Version, however, it is generally supposed, can be referred to an earlier period than the seventh century. From this edition, the Arabic Gospels in the Paris Polyglott (1645,) and the London Polyglott (1657,) were, with some alteration, taken. Erpenius published the New Testament in Arabic at Leyden in 1616, from a manuscript of the thirteenth or fourteenth century. His edition is very much esteemed, but,

unfortunately, very rare. With regard to the Gospels, it is said to present the same version substantially as the edition at Rome. The remaining books of the New Testament in the Paris Polyglott were printed from a manuscript of the fourteenth century, and from it reprinted in the London Polyglott.\* Besides these ancient versions, there are, the Version of the Propaganda, at Rome (1671,) and of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London, 1727; both of which have for their basis the Polyglott Version, but have been altered by their respective editors; the one to accord with the Vulgate, the other with the Greek Text. A new translation of the whole Bible in Arabic was undertaken about thirty years ago, by Sabat, then an apparently sincere and zealous convert from the Mohammedan religion; and his version of the New Testament was published at Calcutta in 1816, at the expense of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

From this sketch, it will be seen that the ancient Arabic Versions are not to be considered as independent witnesses; and it will suffice to examine at length the Arabic of Walton's Polyglott, which is most accessible.

The Arabic of the Polyglott employs two different words to designate Christian baptism, *عَمَدَ* (*amada*) and *مَبَغَ* (*tsabagha*;) the former of these verbs occurs, as the translation of βαπτίζω, forty-seven times; the latter, thirty-one. The meaning of the first may be fairly considered to be determined from its use in the Syriac, on account of the priority of the Syriac translation.

\* A splendid reprint of the Arabic Bible of the London Polyglott was executed at Newcastle, 1811, under the superintendence of the late Professor of Arabic, the Rev. J. D. Carlyle, B. D.

The usual meaning of عَمَد is, undoubtedly, “to make to stand, support, establish, purpose,” &c.; and it is possible that it may be used in one of these senses in the New Testament: but in a careful examination of the passages in which it might be expected to occur, I have not been able to find it. The noun عَمُود<sup>9</sup> (*amudon*) occurs, in the sense of ‘pillar,’ in the passages in which the corresponding Syriac word is found. It has already been noticed, that Freytag refers the meaning ‘baptize’ to the Syriac, as its source. The meaning of the other word, مَبَغ, which is *not noticed at all by Dr. Henderson*, is thus given by Golius: “I. Tinxit pannum. Imbuit. Immersit manum in aqua. Baptizavit. Indicium fecit oculi nutu. VII. et VIII. Pass. .ܡܒܓ Conj. I.”: and by Freytag, “Tinxit pannum; immersit manum in aqua, &c.”\* It is the same root as the Syriac word, which is considered by Dr. Henderson decisive as to the meaning of the Syriac, and which he says signifies “to sink, dip, or put into water for the purpose of wetting.” There seems, therefore, to be no room for controversy, as to its signification. But not only do we thus find a word the acknowledged meaning of which is ‘immerse’ used frequently in the Arabic to designate the ordinance of baptism, but it is so used as to show in what sense the other word employed عَمَد was understood by the translator. The two words occur, in many instances interchangeably. The effect of this interchange will perhaps be best seen

\* The quotation is from his smaller Lexicon; the other meanings which he gives have no relation to the subject, and it is therefore needless to insert them.

by giving two or three of the passages in English, retaining the word *baptize* as the representative of عَمَدَ, and rendering مَبْع by *immerse*. Thus Acts viii. 12 & 13: "When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were *immersed*, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also; and when he was *baptized*, &c." Acts viii. 36 & 38: "The eunuch said, See here is water; what doth hinder me to be *immersed*?—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he *baptized* him." Acts xix. 3, 4, 5: "He said, With what *baptism* were ye *immersed*? And they said, With John's *baptism*. Then said Paul, John verily *baptized* the people with the *baptism* of repentance, saying unto them that they should believe on Him who should come after him, that is on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were *immersed* in the name of the Lord Jesus." Compare also Mark i. 8 & 9;\* Acts x. 47 & 48; 1 Cor. i. 13 & 14. This use of the word عَمَدَ in Arabic confirms what has been already said of its meaning in the Syriac; although, from the long interval between the two versions, no argument could rest solely on this later use of the word.

Another word, غَسَلَ (*ghasala*,) is used to translate βαπτίζω in two instances, and its corresponding noun, غَسْلٌ twice for βαπτισμός: but it is not used in the Polyglott with the meaning Dr. Henderson gives it; viz.

\* The Roman edition of the Arabic Gospels, 1619, accords with the Polyglott in this instance, and probably in the others.

"to denote the performance of the act of Baptism," but to denote Jewish purifications: Mark vii. 4. 8. Luke xi. 38. The meanings which Golius gives are in accordance with this use: "I. Lavit, abluit. V. Diligenter lavit perluitque membra. VII. Ablutus fuit. VIII. Semet lavit et abluit aqua. Sudore maduit ac perfusus fuit *equus*."\* Dr. Henderson partially quotes these definitions: "Lavit, abluit. VII. Ablutus fuit. VIII. Sudor [sudore] perfusus fuit." It is difficult to discover for what purpose this last meaning, Conj. VIII., is given, except it be to indicate by the word *perfusus* that there may be something like sprinkling intended: but the Lexicons only refer this meaning to a horse *bathed* in sweat; and give as the general signification of Conj. VIII. "Semet lavit et abluit aqua," which Dr. Henderson omits.

As regards modern versions, there is the same diversity as in the ancient. In Sabat's Version, مَبَغ (tsabag-

ha,) the word not noticed by Dr. Henderson, (nor indeed referred to by Greenfield,) the meaning of which has been already shown to be *immerse*, is used quite as frequently as it is in the Polyglott.—See, e. g., Matt. iii. 13, 14, 16. Mark vi. 14. &c. The Version of the Propaganda, likewise, which has been reprinted, and is now circulated by the Bible Society in England, uses the word مَبَغ

in almost every instance where it is employed in the Polyglott. In neither of these versions does the verb غَسَلَ occur, to denote the act of Christian baptism. It is used in the same instances as in the Polyglott; and the noun

\* Golius gives two or three other meanings, which have no reference to the matter in hand.

occurs in one additional passage, Heb. ix. 10, as the translation of βαπτισμὸς.

## PERSIC.

Of the age of the Persic Versions of the Gospels (for there is no ancient version extant of the other parts of the New Testament) little is known. The Version of the Polyglott, which is considered to be the most ancient, is taken from the Syriac; and, according to Hug, bears evident traces of the influence of Mohammedanism. It cannot therefore be referred to an earlier period than the 8th century. Several words are employed in the Polyglott Version to translate βαπτίζω. The most frequent is شستن (*shustan*), the meaning of which, according to Golius\* and Richardson, is, to wash: شويیدن (*shuyidan*), a verb of the same signification, is used not unfrequently. Some form of the Syriac word ܠܚܨܐ is occasionally employed, or rather untranslated; one of the two preceding words being generally appended by way of explanation, as Matt. xxi. 25. John i. 33. &c. In Matt. xxviii. 19. یرسا (*tarsa*), a Christian, is given as the explanation of عبادہ (*amadeh*;) and in Mark xvi. 16. the same word is employed to designate one baptized. The meaning of the two words شستن and شويیدن is clear, from the use of them both in the account of Jesus washing the disciples' feet, John xiii.

\* Castelli Lexicon Hoptaglotton.



5—12. The former is used to translate βαπτίζω, Mark vii. 4. Luke xi. 38. where Jewish ablutions are intended, and where the word **غَسَلَ** is used in the Arabic as has been already stated. This word **غسل** is not used at all in the Polyglott Persic: it is however employed in the modern Persian of Martyn.

## ETHIOPIA.

The Ethiopic Version of the whole Bible is generally attributed to Frumentius, who, about the year 330, introduced Christianity into Abyssinia, and became Bishop of Axum. In the New Testament, the root **ጠዕፍ**: (*tamaka*) is uniformly employed as the translation of βαπτίζω and its derivatives; except in one instance, Luke xi. 33, where *ablution* before dinner is rendered by the phrase *washing the hands*; the word employed on this occasion being the same as is used in the account of Jesus washing the disciples' feet, John xiii. 5—12. and in other places. In respect to this version, as well as the Coptic (which will next come under our consideration,) Dr. Henderson disputes the authority of the Lexicons. "The definitions," he says, "produced from the Lexicons of Ludolf and Woide are altogether insufficient to prove that in the Ethiopic and Coptic Versions the words employed for βαπτίζω signify to 'immerse.' It does not appear that, in application to Christian baptism, they ever have this signification" (p. 12.) Now, with regard to the Ethiopic, not only does Ludolf distinctly state that the word employed is equivalent with βαπτίζειν, and that its meaning is to *wash*, to *immerse*, but supports his statements by a very important reference to the Old Testa-

ment, which completely decides the question of the meaning *immerse* belonging to the word, whatever may be its meaning, in reference to Christian baptism. The passage is Jos. iii. 15: "When the feet of the priests **†‡‡‡** were dipped in the brim of the water." Though Dr. Henderson professes to quote Ludolf's definition of the word, he omits any reference to that form of the word which occurs in this passage. This is the more surprising, as Greenfield had already given a passage including this form, and even the passage cited, though without the verse being named, from Ludolf's first edition. The following is Ludolf's statement in the second edition, a few lines below the part which Dr. H. quotes:—

"**†‡‡‡**: Mark xvi. 16. *In genere, tinctus, inunctus, immersus fuit, et sic convenit cum †‡‡‡*: ut, *Dum pedes sacerdotum †‡‡‡ tingerentur in parte aquæ, Jos. iii. 15. (2.) In specie baptizatus sive immersus fuit in aquam, Luc. iii. 21. &c."*

Dr. Henderson also omits all reference to the noun **‡‡‡‡**: (*metemake*,) which is used in John v. 2, 4. and ix. 7. in the sense of a *pool* or *bathing-place*. The meaning is thus given by Ludolf:—

"**‡‡‡‡**: *Baptisterium sive stagnum aut piscina, ubi homines baptizari vel sese immergere solent. Vit. Barb.—Plur. ‡‡‡‡‡*: *Baptisteria, quæ olim foris extra templa in vestibulis constituta erant, quia non baptizatis templa ingredi non licebat. Forma hæc pluralis singulariter accipitur pro Piscina Joh. v. 2. et ix. 7."*

It may further be observed, that the word is used Mark vii. 4. in reference to Jewish purifications, which undoubtedly were ablutions.

Surely here is sufficient to justify Ludolf's definition of the word, and to prove that it has the meaning *immerse*. Besides being used to express ablution, the verb, as we have seen, is employed to express the dipping of the feet of the priests in the Jordan, and the noun for a *bathing-place*. The general meaning of the word being thus shown, it is for Dr. H. to prove that "it does not appear that in application to Christian baptism it ever has this signification." To affirm this without proof is simply begging the question, by precluding the production of the most available evidence. What other method is there of determining the signification in disputed passages, than by reference to passages not in dispute? If the meaning in the latter is 'immerse,' some reason surely must be given why that meaning should be denied in the former? None, however, is offered by Dr. Henderson; nor is there, either by Dr. Henderson or any one else, as far as I am aware, any evidence adduced to show that in instances not relating to Christian baptism any other meaning than 'immerse' or 'wash' is attached to the word. There is, therefore, no balancing of conflicting evidence; the whole force of what has been brought forward is applicable to the determination of the question. The word clearly had some meaning before it was used as the designation of the Christian rite; the only meanings, of which there is evidence, are, *immersion* and *ablution*: what further proof can be required that such is its meaning in reference to Christian baptism? We might, then, fairly consider the matter to be determined already. It will be satisfactory, however, to add to what has been said, the evidence of the Abyssinian Ritual, which was published in Latin at Rome in 1549, from a translation by Peter Abbot of that Church. The directions for baptism, as far as they are applicable

to our present purpose, are as follows; the formula addressed to those who are baptized being given in the original Ethiopic as well as the Latin;—"Sacerdos autem eos suscipit et ter *mergit*, dicens; አጠጥቀኝ : *Ego baptizo te* &c.;"\* plainly showing that the term used to express the rite performed (which is the same as that employed in the Ethiopic Version) was esteemed to be equivalent with *mergo*, 'immerse. The modern *Amharic* Version, executed under the superintendence of M. Asselin, French Consul at Cairo, by Abu-Rumi, a native of Abyssinia, employs the same term as the Ethiopic. This version into the vernacular language of Abyssinia, as well as the ancient Ethiopic, has been beautifully printed in London, under the editorial care of T. P. Platt, Esq., at the expense of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

#### EGYPTIAN.

There are three different dialects of the Egyptian language, in all of which versions of the New Testament have been made. They are, the dialect of Lower Egypt, called the Coptic or Memphitic; that of Upper Egypt, the Sahidic or Thebaic; and the Basmuric, the seat of which is generally placed in the Delta, though Hug conjectures that it is a dialect of Middle Egypt; it differs little from the Sahidic. The first of these is most generally known, and the term Coptic has therefore been sometimes applied to them all indiscriminately. The whole of the New Testa-

\* *Modus Baptizandi, &c. quibus Ecclesia Ethiopum utitur. Rom. 1549. p. xix.*—Peter, the translator of this Ritual, is no doubt the same person as edited the first printed Ethiopic New Testament, published at Rome in 1543; which is reprinted in Walton's Polyglott.

ment in this dialect was published at Oxford, with a translation by Wilkins, in 1716. Of the other two dialects, fragments only have been printed. The Sahidic is generally esteemed the most ancient of the three, and is referred to the second century; the Coptic, and the fragments of the Basmuric, are supposed to belong to the third.

The word generally employed in the *Coptic* is **ωλλc**. Two other forms, which are plainly referable to the same root, **Oλλc** and **ελλc**, are occasionally used. The word seems to be the same as the Arabic غمس “*demersit rem, submersit in aquam rem, intinxit.*” \* Tattam, † after LaCroze and Woide, defines the word thus: **ωλλc**, Πι, καταποντισμός, Vulg. *præcipitatio*, Ps. li. 4. βαπτισμός, baptismus, Matt. iii. 7. καταποντίζειν, submergere, Ps. liv. 9. καταδύνειν, descendere in profundum. Exod. xv. 5. καταπίνεσθαι, devorari, Ps. cvi. 27. βαπτίζεσθαι, ‡ submergi, Lev. xi. 32. βαπτίζειν, baptizare, Matt. iii. 11. καταλύειν, dissolvere, 2 Pet. iii. 6. Sah. § cum **εθoтп** compositum ἐνδύνειν, irrepere, penetrare in locum, 2 Tim. iii. 6. **πωλxe επωλλc**, nuga scurrilia, MS. Borg. cc. **†ωλλc**, βαπτίζειν, baptizare, Joh. i. 25.—

\* Freytag Lex. Arab.

† Lexicon Ægyptiaco-Latinum ab Henrico Tattam, A. [M. Oxon 1835.

‡ This is an error for βάπτεσθαι, copied apparently from Woide.

§ There is an error here, which I have no means of correcting with certainty, the reference being to the Sahidic. The word καταλύειν does not occur at all in the Epistles of Peter;

ⲥⲓⲱⲁⲗⲗⲥ, βαπτίζεσθαι, baptizari, Matt. iii. 6. Arab.  
 ⲥⲱⲁⲗⲗⲥ."


These definitions are almost identical with those given by Greenfield from Woide's Lexicon; which Dr. Henderson has not thought it worth while to examine at all, but has dismissed with the remark already quoted, that the definitions adduced from the Lexicon of Woide are altogether insufficient to prove that the word employed for βαπτίζω signifies 'to immerse.' Yet it is difficult to conceive what use of the word could suffice to prove this, if its use as the translation of the Greek words βάπτω, καταδύνω, καταποντίζω, καταπίνω, will not. What can it mean, but *dip, sink, overwhelm, swallow up?*\* All the examples, however, adduced by the Lexicons are from the Old Testament; let us see how it is used in the New, in passages not relating to baptism. It occurs as the translation of καταποντίζω in the only two passages in which that word is found, Matt. xiv. 30. and xviii. 6. It is also used as the translation of βυθίζω in the two instances in which it occurs, Luke v. 7. 1 Tim. vi. 9.; and it is once used to

probably κατακλύζειν, which occurs in the verse quoted, is the word intended; but then the Latin should be *inundare*, not *dissolvere*. ⲱⲁⲗⲗⲥ is not used in the Coptic as the translation either of καταλύειν or of κατακλύζειν, a word which occurs only in this passage.

\* The use of the phrase ⲱⲁⲗⲗⲥ ⲉⲃⲱⲛⲏ, as the translation of ἐνδύνω, "to creep into," is very easily explained, when we remember the composition of the Greek term—ἐν, *in, within*, and δύνω, *to go under, sink, dive*: hence ἐνδύνω, *to enter into*. The Coptic is a literal translation of this.

translate καταπίνω, Heb. xi. 29.—This last is a remarkable instance: it relates to the Egyptians being *drowned* in the Red Sea.\* The word is *never* used as the translation of any term signifying *wash*, nor even of βάπτω or ἐμβάπτω. Could any evidence more conclusively prove that the word means to ‘immerse,’ ‘plunge,’ and even ‘sink?’

Fragments of the *Sahidic* Version have been published by several critics. The largest collection is that undertaken by Woide, and published after his death, at Oxford, in 1799. The only fragments which have been discovered of the *Basmuric* Version were published, together with some additional ones of the Sahidic and the corresponding passages of the Coptic, by Engelbreth, in 1811.† As the two versions are nearly identical, they may be treated of to-

\* In two other of the instances quoted, Matt. xviii. 6. and 1 Tim. vi. 9. our translation has *drown*; but the sense does not necessarily require a stronger meaning than *sink*; though drowning is implied in the first case, since there could be no emersion. This use of the Coptic word may suggest an answer to a remark of Dr. Henderson's (which, however, does not fall within the design of the present pamphlet,) that βαπτίζω, when it signifies the submersion of the whole body, conveys the idea “that the body thus submerged sunk to rise no more.” Βαπτίζω when applied to ships sinking, undoubtedly gives this idea: so does  when applied to the sinking of a person in the sea with a millstone about his neck; or to Pharaoh and his host being submerged in the Red Sea; but neither of the words mean more than *sink*; the rising again not being part of the idea, in either case. Whether it is *drowning*, or *dipping* merely, must depend upon the context.

† Fragmenta Basmurico-Coptica Veteris et Novi Testamenti, quæ in Musæo Borgiano Velitris asservantur, cum reliquis versionibus Ægyptiis contulit, latine vertit, necnon criticis et philologicis adnotationibus illustravit W. F. Engelbreth. *Havniæ*, 1811.

gether. In the Sahidic fragments edited by Woide, there are about thirty passages containing the verb βαπτίζω. In the fragments edited by Engelbreth, the only instances in which baptism is mentioned, are 1 Cor. xv. 29. where the verb twice occurs; and Heb. vi. 2. (not in the Sahidic.) ix. 10; in both of which the noun βαπτισμὸς is found in the Greek. The words employed in all these passages, in both dialects, are from the Greek; the verb being **ΒΑΠΤΙΖΕ**, and the noun **ΒΑΠΤΙΣΜΑ**. It will not appear surprising that the Greek words are used in these versions, when we remember that the Greek influence in Egypt, under the rule of the Ptolemies, had introduced multitudes of Greek words into the language; so that in the Coptic Version one cannot open a page without meeting with several. In five pages of Wilkins's edition, taken at random, in the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles, containing altogether fifty-nine verses, I have counted forty-eight Greek words, thirty-three of them different (exclusive of particles, such as **ΜΕΝ**, **ΤΑΡ**, **ΖΗΝΑ**, &c, which are found continually;) thus giving, on an average, four Greek words to every five verses. These words do not seem to have been retained, as was done in the Latin, from any supposed sacredness in the terms, but merely because they expressed to the Egyptian reader the idea to be conveyed. The following is the list of words in the last page of the five which were examined: 1 Thess. v. 1--13:

ver. 1. **ΧΡΟΝΟΣ**, **ΚΕΡΟΣ**, **ΧΡΙΣ**. v. 2. **ΑΚΡΙΒΩΣ**. v. 3. **ΖΗΡΗΝΗ**. **ΕΞΑΠΗΝΑ**. v. 8. **ΑΤΑΠΗ**, **ΠΕΡΙΚΕΦΑΛΕΑ**, **ΖΕΛΠΙΣ**. v. 13. **ΑΤΑΠΗ**, **ΖΗΡΗΝΗ**, In the Sahidic dialect



Greek words are far more numerous than they are in the Coptic. In twenty-five verses which I have examined in Woide's Sahidic fragments (Acts viii. 1—25) there are thirty-eight Greek words (exclusive of particles,) twenty-five of them different; giving, on an average, three Greek words to every two verses.

## ARMENIAN.

The Armenian Version of the whole Bible was made about the beginning or middle of the fifth century, by Mesrob, the inventor of the Armenian Alphabet, assisted by other learned men; and amongst them, Moses Chorenensis, who wrote a History of Armenia which has come down to us, in which he gives an account of the translation.

The word which it employs for the translation of βαπτίζω is *մոգրեմ* (*mogredil*;) except in one instance, 1 Cor. i.

16. where the phrase (*dal gnik*,) 'to give a seal,' occurs. The meaning of the word is thus given in the Armenian Lexicon of Brand and Aucher, the most recent Lexicon that has been published: "*(mogredil*;) *v. a.* to baptize, to wash by plunging into water." No examples are given to this or any other word throughout the Dictionary. In a language so little known to English scholars, it might be deemed sufficient to rest on the authority of the learned Father Paschal Aucher, of the Armenian Academy of St. Lazarus at Venice, who is acquainted with the English language; but it will be more satisfactory to find other instances of the use of the word.

The word is used in the New Testament to translate βαπτίζω, where the reference is to Jewish ablutions, Mark vii. 4. Luke xi. 38. It is also used in the Old Testament (where βαπτίζω is used in the Lxx.) 2 Kings v. 14: Naa-

man “*dipped* himself in the Jordan seven times: and in the Apocrypha, Judith xii. 7.\* and Eccclus. xxxiv. 30. in both of which passages βαπτίζω occurs. Thus we see that it is a word applicable to all the meanings of βαπτίζω; and undoubtedly signifies, in one instance, *dip*; in others, at least, *bathe*, *perform ablution*.

The modern Armenian Version employs the same term; and it is still the current word in the language to designate baptism.

#### SLAVONIC.

The Slavonic Version of the New Testament, and of parts at least of the Old, was made by Cyril, the inventor of the Slavonic Alphabet, and Methodius, his brother, who, about the middle of the ninth century, introduced Christianity amongst several of the Slavic tribes. It is not certain for what particular district the translation was made; but the language “has long since become the common property of all the Slavic nations.”†

The term by which it uniformly renders βαπτίζω, when that word is applied to the Christian rite, is *krestiti*; the meaning of which is “*to cross*,” a term which has manifestly been derived from the use of the sign of the cross in baptism. The word is thus, in strictness, inapplicable to any other than the technical meaning of βαπτίζω: yet it is curious to notice, both as showing how little dependence can be placed on etymology alone in deciding the actual meaning of a word, and as indicating

\* It is used also in the following verse, where the Greek has ἀνέβη.

† See an elaborate article on the Slavic Languages and Literature, by Dr. E. Robinson, in the Biblical Repository, Vol. IV. Nos. 14 and 15.

the manner in which they practised baptism, that so completely had the word, at the time when the translation was made, lost its etymological meaning when applied to baptism, and obtained the signification of ablution, as to be employed for Jewish purifications. Thus in Luke xi. 38. we meet with the following translation: "The Pharisee wondered that he had not, *krestisia*, crossed himself before dinner;" where the margin reads, *ymusia*, washed: and in like manner the noun, *krestshenia*, is used Mark vii. 8. "the *crossing* of pots and cups:"—*omovenia* is found in the margin, the same word as is used to translate βαπτισμὸς, Heb. xi. 10.

Many modern versions in languages belonging to the Slavic family adopt the same term as the Slavonic employs. Amongst these, are the Russian, Polish, Bohemian, Lithuanian, and Lettish or Livonian.

## GOTHIC .

The whole of the Scriptures was translated into that dialect of the Gothic which was spoken by the inhabitants of Mœsia, by Ulphilas, Bishop of the Mœsians, in the fourth century. The greater part of this version has been lost; and the only remaining portion of any considerable extent is preserved in the *Cordex Argenteus*, now deposited in the University of Upsal. From this manuscript the Gospels (as far as they are extant) have been several times printed. The edition most accessible in this country is that published at Oxford, in 1750, by Lye, with a Latin translation and notes by Benzell.

The word usually employed in this version to translate βαπτίζω is **𐌳𐌹𐌸𐌸𐌹𐌶𐌰** (*daupjan*), which, it is

on all hands agreed, signifies *immerse*. If proof were wanting, the meaning would seem to be determined by the preposition with which the word is used, where a preposition is employed; *c. g.* Mark i. 8. **İK ΔΑΠΠΓΑ**

**İZVIS İN VΛTIN**, ‘I baptize you *in* water.’ Dr. Henderson admits that the word means to *immerse*, but seems to concede this meaning somewhat unwillingly. “That the Gothic *daupjan*,” he says, “may signify to immerse, is not denied; though this action is more properly expressed in that language by *ufdaupjan*.” It will be immediately seen that this latter word is a compound of the former, with the preposition **nf** *uf*, which signifies *under*; and it seems quite clear, that if *ufdaupjan* means to *dip under*, *daupjan* must mean *dip*: it is just the difference between *mergo* and *submergo*. There need, however, be no hesitation as to the meaning Ulphilas attached to *daupjan*, or at least none as to the mode in which he translated βαπτίζω; for in two instances he employs the very word by which *immersion* is, according to Dr. Henderson, “more properly expressed,”

**nfΔΑΠΠΓΑΝ**, as the translation of βαπτίζω, Luke

iii. 21: **İLİSN nfΔΑΠΠΙΑΛΜΜΑ**,

“Jesus being *immersed*,” and vii. 29:

**nfΔΑΠΠΙΑΛΙ ΔΑΠΠΕΙΝΛΙ**

**İGHANNIS**, “being *immersed* with the baptism of John.” In this last instance it will be seen that both words occur together; and no doubt can remain that Ulphilas understood by John’s baptism, *immersion*.

We need not then inquire further respecting the Gothic Version; but it is of great importance to ascertain the connexion of this word with the terms of similar application in other Teutonic dialects. On this subject, Dr. Henderson says: "As it regards the Gothic dialects, which have repeatedly been appealed to with great confidence on this subject, it is a settled point, with all those who are acquainted with them, that the reference is totally irrelevant. That the Mæso-Gothic *daupian*, the Anglo-Saxon *dyppen*, the Dutch *doopen*, the Swedish *dopa*, the Danish *dobe*, and the German *taufen*, all correspond in sound to our English word *dip*, does not admit of dispute, any more than the fact, that *dab*, *daub*, and *dub* have the same correspondence; but nothing would be more erroneous than to conclude, that, with the exception of the Anglo-Saxon, they must have the same signification." In these remarks, Dr. Henderson p. 12.) seems to confound two very distinct questions—the etymology of the words, and their signification. Their correspondence in sound will certainly prove nothing of itself, as to sameness of meaning; nor am I aware that, with regard to these particular words, such an assertion has ever been made; but this correspondence affords evidence of etymological identity, whatever diversity of meaning the words may at present have. Now, that all these words are etymologically connected, and are, in fact, but varied forms of the same original word, admits of as little dispute as their correspondence in sound; and it cannot be necessary to inform Dr. Henderson that this is "a settled point with all who are acquainted with these dialects." Every philologist knows that the root *daupjan* (taking the Gothic as the most ancient form) is to be traced in almost all the Teutonic dialects. It would be tedious to produce numerous authorities in proof of this assertion. It will be suffi-

cient to quote the etymological dictionary of Meidinger : and the reader who wishes for further confirmation of the fact may consult the works mentioned in the note, where he will find similar lists, more or less extensive :—

“Dippen, eintauchen, *enfonce*r, *plonger*. Ang. S. dippan. dyppan, *plonger*, *baptiser* : dyfan, dufan, gedufan, *plonger*. Eng. to dip, to dive, *plonger*. Holl. doopen. Swed. doepa. Dan. dyppe. It. tuffare.

“Taufen, *baptiser*. Ang. S. dyppan, dippan, depa, dyfan. Swed. doepa. Dan. doebe. Holl. doopen. Alt. D. doufan. Alt. G. daupian, *plonger*, *se laver*.

“Taufe, *bapteme*. Alt. D. taufi, toufe, toufa, daufi, doufa, touft. Alt. G. daupein(s). Holl. doop, dooping, doopsel. Swed. dop, doepelse. Dan. daab. It. tuffo *l'action de plonger*.”\*

It cannot then for a moment be supposed, that when Dr. Henderson asserted that it was a settled point that the reference to the Teutonic dialects was altogether irrelevant, he meant to deny the *etymological* identity of the words ; though his remark, ‘that they correspond in sound,’ naturally suggests to the mind of the reader the

\* Meidinger Dictionnaire Etymologique et comparatif des Langues Teutogothiques. Frankfort, 1833, p. 400. It will be seen, that the first list of verbs contains those whose ordinary signification is *dip* ; whilst the second gives such as are more immediately connected with *taufen* in the sense *baptize*. A comparison of the two lists, however, will show that the same words of the Anglo-Saxon, Dutch, and Swedish, are included in both. It therefore seemed proper to insert the whole ; though the second sufficiently establishes the etymological connexion of all the words mentioned by Dr. Henderson as the translation of βαπτίζω. See also Junius Gothicum Glossarium and his Etymologicum Anglicanum, Spellman, Wachter Glossarium Germanicum, Ihre Glossarium Suio-Gothicum (quoted below,) and Adelung's Worterbuch.

idea that their etymology was the point he had in view. It must surely have been, rather, that he might not puzzle the unlearned reader with questions of philology, that he dismissed the comparison of them with the remark that *dab*, *dub*, and *daub* have the same correspondence. Had he explicitly stated, that, though similar, not in sound merely, but in etymology, nothing would be more erroneous than to conclude that therefore they all must have the same signification, every one at all acquainted with the history of languages must immediately have admitted the truth of the remark. Their etymology *proves* nothing as to their signification; yet it must be allowed, on the other hand, that whilst it does not by any means determine the matter, it is to be regarded as *prima-facie* evidence of their meaning. It will, however, be needful in this case to enter on a more extended examination of the separate versions than we have hitherto bestowed on modern translations.

GERMAN.—The Germans translate βαπτίζω by *taufen*. It is certain, that not this word, but *tauchen*, *eintauchen*, are now in use to express *dip* or *immerse*; and that *taufen* is, in its ordinary use, confined to the ecclesiastical meaning, *baptize*. But it is plain, that it must have had, if it does not now retain, some meaning besides the more restricted one which it at present generally bears; unless, indeed, it had been a word coined for the sole purpose of expressing the Christian rite. Now, we have shown that it is etymologically connected with the Gothic *daupjan*, which means to *immerse*; and which is employed in the Gothic Version, as *taufen* is in the German, to designate Christian baptism. Moreover, the word is found in the German language, with but slight variation of form, as early as the ninth century. In the metrical Version of the

Gospels by Otfried, about the year 870, the word is *doufan*;\* and in the Version of Tatian's Harmony, also in the German of the ninth century, *toufan*.† In the fifteenth century, thirty-four years before Luther's Version appeared, the word *taufen*, precisely in the same form in which he employed it, is used in a German Version of the Gospels and Epistles of the Roman Catholic Service.‡ Thus the word is clearly traced from the Gothic of the fourth century to the time of Luther. The question then seems to resolve itself into this; Was the meaning *immerse*, which belonged to the Gothic, retained in the later German; or had it wholly lost that meaning when it became a German word? To answer this question, we need go no further back than the age of Luther. We find indisputable evidence that at that time it had another meaning than the technical one, and that that meaning was its etymological one, *immerse* or *dip*. Luther translates the Hebrew טָבַל (*immergo*) by this word, 2 Kings v. 14: "Naaman went down and (*taufte*) dipped himself seven times in the Jordan." Besides this, Luther, in his sermon on the sacrament of Baptism, expressly declares, that though it is no longer the general practice to immerse children in baptism, it is nevertheless right that the child, or other person to be baptized, should *according to the meaning of the word* (*Taufe*,) be sunk and dipped (*taufte*) all over in the water, and again raised up.§ In this passage,

\* Adelung's Worterbuch.

† Das Evangelium des h. Matthæus im Hochdeutschem des neunten Jahrhunderts aus dem St. Galler Codex der Tatianischen Evangelienharmonie von J. A. Schmeller. *Stuttg.* 1827.

‡ Ewangelia und epistel mit der gloss auch anfang der mess &c. durch Thoma Annshelm von Bade Getruckt. und vollendet zu Strassburg, 1488.

§ "So sollt' es doch so seyn und ware recht, dass man nach



Luther not only asserts that the meaning of the word is properly *dip*, but himself uses it in this sense; for what other meaning can be affixed to it here? Knapp, speaking of the meaning of the word βαπτίζειν says it “properly signifies to dip (*like the German, taufen*), to immerse, to wash by immersion.”\* Augusti† says, “the German name *Taufe* is unquestionably derived from *Tiefe* (depth;”) and refers to Luther’s sermon, quoted above. It will be immediately seen that this derivation is the same as that which we have established above: the noun *Tiefe*, as well as our English words ‘depth’ and ‘deep,’ being all referable to the verb ‘dip’ *daupjan*. Augusti adds, “It is altogether an extraordinary thing (*Blos eine sonderbarkeit ist es*) that many would derive it from the Hebrew letter Tau, or from Tav or Taf טָ signum, and so compare it with the Greek term σφραγίς. See *Henr. Alsted Lexic. Theol. c. 12 p. 315*. According to others, it must be derived from טבעה *annulus obsignatorius*: *Gerhard, T. ix. p. 69.*—Lastly, Adelung, the highest philological authority thus gives the meaning of the word, and examples of its use, in his Dictionary:—“Taufen, verb. regul. act. 1. Properly to dip (*tauchen*) in water, where it has the same meaning as *tauchen*, and differs from it only in the suffix. ‘A wooden fire-ball *dipped* (*getauft*) in pitch and rosin,’ *Fronsb.* ‘A caldron in which to dip (*taufen*) the fire-work,’ *Id.* ‘Naaman *dipped* (*taufte*) himself in the Jordan seven times,’ 2 Kings v. 14. where

Laut des Wortleins (Taufe) das Kind, oder jeglichen, der getauft wird, ganz hinein in’s Wasser senkte und taufte, und wieder herauszoge.”—*Luther’s Werke von Walch, T. x. p. 2593*; quoted from Augusti’s *Archæologie, T. ii. p. 399*.

\* G. C. Knapp’s *Vorlesungen über die christliche Glaubenslehre, T. ii. p. 447*.

† *Handbuch der christlichen Archæologie, T. ii. p. 312*.

it is used for *bathe*. 'The Strymon, in which the host of cranes *dip* (*tauf*) their crumpled feathers:' *Opitz*. In German, this meaning is antiquated; and it is, 2. only used in a special sense, to dip (*tauchen*) in water, in a religious manner, &c."\*

The evidence now adduced, amply shows that Dr. Henderson's bold assertion is not warranted in respect to the *meaning* of the German word, any more than it is in respect to its etymology.

DUTCH.—The word employed for βαπτίζω in the Dutch Version is *doopen*: the word generally used for *dip* is *indoopen*. No one can doubt that the radical meaning of both words is the same, the difference being merely the addition to the latter of the preposition *in*. This preposition, however, is not always prefixed when the meaning is to *dip*; and it is most surprising that Dr. Henderson should venture the assertion, that 'no *Dutchman*, &c. would for a moment suppose the word meant any thing else than baptism, by the application of water to the body of the person baptized'; when, if we turn to Luke xvi. 24, we find that Lazarus' dipping his finger in water is expressed by this very word, "That he may dip the tip of his finger in water (*in het water doope*." ) If it be said,

\* "Taufen, verb. regul. act. 1. Eigentlich, in das Wasser tauchen, wo es mit *tauchen* gleich bedeutend und von demselben nur im Suffixo verschieden ist. *Eine holzerne Feuerkugel in Bech und Harz getauft*, Fronsbl. *Kessel, das Feuerwerk darcin zu taufen*, eben ders. *Naeman taufte sich im Jordan sieben Mahl*, 2 Kon. v. 14. wo es für *baden* stehet.

———*Der Strymon,*

*In den der Kranche Heer die krummen Federn tauf*. *Opitz*. Im Hochdeutschen ist es in dieser Bedeutung veraltet; wo man es, 2. nur im engern Verstande braucht, auf eine gottesdienstliche Art in das Wasser tauchen, &c." *Adelung's "orterbuch*, T. iv. p. 924.

the prepositson being expressed before the noun, there was no need to repeat it with the verb, but that nevertheless it is to be understood with it, reference may be made to other passages in which the compound verb is used notwithstanding the preposition *in* before the noun; *e. g.* Matt. xxvi. 23: "He that dippeth his hand in the dish with me (*in de schotel indoopt*:") and the argument would prove too much, since it would include such a passage as the following, Matt. iii. 6: "And were baptized by him in the Jordan (*gedoopt in de Jordaen*.")

In addition to this, the following examples of the use of the word *doopen* for *dip* may be quoted from Séwel's Dutch and English Dictionary enlarged by Buys, Amst. 1766: "*Brood in wyn doopen*, to *dip* bread into wine. *Zyn brood in de saus doopen*, to dip one's bread into the sauce." The meanings which he gives to the word are, "*To dip, plunge, baptize, christen*."

In the Old Testament, neither *doopen* nor *indooopen* is used for *dip*, but the form is varied to *doppen* and *indoppen*. The latter word, however, is used, as far as I have been able to ascertain, in only three instances; viz. Lev. iv. 17. xiv. 16. Josh. iii. 15: whilst the simple word *doppen*, without the preposition, is used in four times as many; *e. g.* Lev. iv. 6. xiv. 6, 51. 2 Kings v. 14. &c. It is thus clearly shown that the radical meaning of the word *doopen* or *doppen* is not to apply water in any way, and the preposition *in* therefore necessary to restrict the signification to *dipping*; but the primary meaning is *dip*, and the preposition is merely intensive.

SWEDISH and DANISH.—After this extended examination of the German and Dutch, it will not be necessary to detain the reader by a lengthened account of the other Teutonic dialects. The words used in the Swedish and

Danish are almost identical; the former being *dopa*, the latter *dobe*. Of the Swedish, Ihre gives the following account: “*Dopa*, mergere, Ulph. *daupjan*. A. S. *dufian*, *depan*, *dyppan*, *dopettan*. Al. *toufen*. Belg. *dippen*, *doppen*. Est vere propria vocis *dopa* significatio, uti dixi, aquis submergere. Inde Uplandi, ubi puteis parum aquæ inest, dicunt, ‘Ther war ej sa mycket watten at man kunde *dopa* æmbaret.’ (There was not so much water that one could *dip* a bucket.) II. Aquæ lustrali immergere, baptizare. Veteres tamen hujus loco sæpe *christna* aut *skira* usurparunt; unde *skirn* baptismus, *skirdur* baptizatus, *skirnarbrun* baptisterium, fons sacer. . . . . Doppa: frequentivum ejusdem radices. A. S. *dyppan*. Germ. *doppen*, *duppen*. Ital. *tuffare*. Angl. *dipp*. Gr. ὀπτειν.”\*

The word *skira*, noticed by Ihre in the preceding quotation, is that which Dr. Henderson mentions as employed in the *Icelandic* Version; and is synonymous with the *fullian* of the Anglo-Saxon Version, which will next come under our notice. It will be seen that Ihre distinctly refers *doppa*, the ordinary Swedish word for *dip*, to the same root as *dopa* (*baptize*,) and calls it a frequentative; whilst he not only gives the meaning *immerse to do pa*, but cites an example of its use in this sense. A reference to the quotation from Meidinger already given will show that he also affirms the same thing, by mentioning this form of the word in both his lists. I have not ascertained how far the meaning *dip* belonged to the Danish word *dobe*; the ordinary term in that language to express this idea being *dyppe*. The close approximation of the Danish word to that employed by the Swedes sufficiently

\* Ihre Glossarium Suo Gothicum. Ups. 1769.

shows that its radical meaning is the same ; and it seemed unnecessary to trouble the reader with any further investigation.

One general observation with regard to all these versions must be made. Dr. Henderson lays great stress on the fact, that the prepositions employed with all these words correspond with the English *with*, not *in* ; as the German *mit wasser taufen*, &c. : and he hence concludes that “ neither Luther, nor the authors of the Dutch, Danish, and Swedish Versions, had any intention of conveying the idea of immersion as applied in βαπτίζω.” It might be deemed a sufficient answer, to adduce instances of these same versions using the verb in connexion with the preposition *in*, as Matt. iii. 6. *Germ.* Und liessen sich taufen von ihm *im* Jordan. *Dutch*, Ende wierden van hem gedoopt *in* de Jordaen. So also Mark i. 9. The people could scarcely be *getauft* or *gedoopt in* the Jordan without immersion : and if the authors did not intend immersion, why did they not say *zum* Jordan, or *tot* de Jordaen, *at* the Jordan, instead of *in* it ? Still, this does not explain the use of the preposition *mit* or *met*, where it is employed. The passage already quoted from Luther seems directly applicable to the point. The general practice at the time when these versions were made was not immersion, but the application of water to the body of the person. In accordance with this practice the translators join the verb with a preposition not applicable to immersion ; still, however, in the case of Luther protesting that *taufen* is properly to *dip*, and in the other cases not in the least interfering with the original meaning of the word. All that can be said, is, that the word being retained, though the form of administering the ordinance was changed, was in some measure accommodated

to this change by means of the preposition with which it was connected.

In concluding these remarks on the Gothic dialects, the author begs to observe, that he has not the presumption to place his knowledge of them on an equality with that of Dr. Henderson ; who informs us, in a note, that what he has stated is “founded on a familiar acquaintance with these languages, which he has been in the habit of speaking or reading for upwards of thirty years.” But surely Dr. Henderson’s authority, high as it may be in these matters, is not to be placed above that of the most eminent German scholars and philologists, in respect to their own language, and the others closely connected with it. Their testimony has been cited ; and, did it not seem unnecessary to accumulate evidence, much more might have been adduced to the same effect. Examples, moreover, as far as my acquaintance with the languages would permit, have been produced, of the actual use of the words in the sense which Dr. Henderson disputes ; and these plainly cannot be overset by the negative evidence even of thirty years’ acquaintance with the languages. The fact seems to be, that Dr. Henderson has treated the question as though it were asserted that the words for *baptize* were used in the language of ordinary life for *immerse* or *dip* ; whereas it is acknowledged by all who have any acquaintance with the subject, that this is not the case : and he has overlooked the gist of the argument, which is, that the words not only are etymologically connected with *dip*, but in the languages themselves were originally used with this meaning,—a meaning which they still retain, though this use of them has become antiquated, in consequence of their special application to a religious ordinance, and their being thereby taken from the language of familiar

intercourse. That this is the case, especially with regard to the German and Dutch, the author cannot but think has been abundantly proved by the evidence adduced.

## ANGLO-SAXON.

The Anglo-Saxon Version of the New Testament is to be referred to about the eighth century. It is not of much authority in general criticism, having been made from the Latin. The Gospels only have been printed. The edition which I have examined is that of Marshall; printed, together with the Gothic Gospels by Junius, Dord. 1665, and Amst. 1634. The verb usually employed to translate βαπτίζω is *fullian* or *fulligian*, answering to our English word "full," in the sense of 'cleanse:' *fulluht* is used for "baptism," except in one instance, Luke iii. 12, where a *þpeʒene*, "washing" is employed; and *Fulluhtcpe* for "Baptist," except in Luke ix. 19, where the Latin word *Baptistam* is retained. In Mark vii. 4, and Luke ix. 38, the verb βαπτίζω, used in reference to Jewish ablutions, is translated by a *þfean*, "to wash," the same root as the noun already quoted, a *þpeʒene*. With regard to this version, Dr. Henderson says: "In giving *dyppan* as the Anglo-Saxon word for *dip*, Junius, as quoted by Mr. Greenfield, is perfectly correct; but the reader must not suffer himself to be misled into the belief that it is used in reference to *baptism*. It is never thus used in the New Testament." Dr. Henderson's desire to make a strong assertion seems to have led him into an error in this instance, which a reference to Lye's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary might have prevented. The statement is certainly true in respect to Marshall's edition; and may probably be correct as re-

gards those of Parker and Lisle, the only other editors of the Anglo-Saxon Gospels. But it is not to be received in the unqualified manner in which Dr. Henderson makes it. The verb *dyppan*, as well as *depan*, a varied form of the same word, is used in reference to baptism in Anglo-Saxon MSS of the Gospels; as the following extracts from Lye's Dictionary\* will show:—

“*Depan, To dip*, Baptizare; R. Matt. iii. 11. C. Luc. xvi. 24. *Vid. Dyppan.*”

“*Dyppan, To dip*. Immergere, baptizare; R. Matt. iii. 11. xxviii. 19. Tingere; Lev. iv. 19.”

The letters R. and C. refer to the MSS from which the quotations are made: the first being a manuscript copy of the Gospels preserved in the Bodleian Library, “exemplar Rushworthianum;” the other, one in the Public Library at Cambridge, “exemplar Cantabrigiense.”

We find, then, that the word *dyppan* was used in the Anglo-Saxon translation of the New Testament: and we need not inquire further respecting the meaning of the word, since it is on all hands admitted that it is the same word as our modern English *dip*, and bore the same meaning. Even Dr. Henderson agrees that to give *dyppan*, as the Anglo-Saxon word for *dip*, is “perfectly correct.”

#### L A T I N .

We have evidence of the existence of Latin translations of the New Testament as early as the close of the second century, from the fact that Tertullian speaks of such versions in a manner which shows that they were in common

\* *Dictionarium Saxonico et Gothico-Latinum*; auctore Ed. Lye, A. M. Edidit Owen Manning, 2 tom. fol. *London*. 1772.



use when he wrote against Marcion (A. D. 207).<sup>\*</sup> It has moreover been proved by Semler†, that Tertullian quotes, not from the Greek, but from a Latin translation. No Latin version extant, however, can be traced to so early a period; and with regard to the point in question, there is a remarkable difference between the versions employed by the early Fathers and all which are at present known. Not only the authorized Vulgate, but all the Latin MSS which have been published, uniformly, as far as I have been able to ascertain, employ the latinized Greek word *baptizo*. In all the passages, however, quoted by Tertullian, except one, the verb *tingo* is used as the translation of βαπτίζω. The exception is 1 Cor. xv. 29; which is referred to on one occasion,‡ and distinctly quoted on another§, with the word *baptizo*. Tertullian wrote a treatise on baptism with the title *De Baptismo*; but it is remarkable that the verb *baptizo* does not once occur in it: *tingo* is the verb constantly employed; and not only in this treatise, but throughout his writings, *tingo*, occasionally *mergo* or *mergito*, are the verbs generally used: the common designations of baptism, on the other hand, are *baptismus* and *baptisma*, occasionally *intinctio*;|| and the Baptist is called *Baptizator*. The treatises in which the quotation containing the word *baptizo* occurs are probably of a later date than that *De Baptismo*. These facts

<sup>\*</sup> Adv. Marcion. lib. ii. c. 9. "quidam de Græco interpretantes." Lib. v. c. 4. "sicut invenimus interpretatum." See also De Monog. c. 11. and Adv. Praxeam. c. 5.

† Appendix to Wetstein's Prolegomena, quoted by Marsh: and the Dissertation in his edit. of Tertullian, Hd. 1773. T. 5. p. 230, seqq.

‡ De resurrectione carnis, c. 43.

§ Adv. Marcion. lib. v. c. 10.

|| De poenitentia, c. 2, & 6.

show that the nouns were in use, as Latin words, throughout the period of Tertullian's writings, whilst it was only during the course of that time that the verb was latinized. It is to a later period still that we must refer the general acceptance of this verb as the recognised equivalent for the Greek word. Cyprian wrote about forty years after Tertullian: in his quotations, the word generally employed is *baptizo*: *tingo* is used four or five times in quoting two passages, Matt. xxviii. 19,\* and Gal. iii. 27.† In his own writing, the verb *baptizo* is of very frequent occurrence. From this period (about A. D. 250) down to the present, the latinized word, which thus gradually supplanted the native term, has continued to be the recognised ecclesiastical verb to express the Christian rite; and has not only been employed in all Church translations into the Latin, but is the word most frequently found in the writings of the Latin Fathers. Still, such words as *tingo*, *mergo*, *mergito*, *demergo* occur as synonyms of *baptizo*, as late, at least, as the fifth century.‡

We see, then, that the nouns became Latin words at a considerably earlier period than the verb did; but that, still, no very long time elapsed before the verb also was transplanted in the Latin language, as the peculiar designation of the Christian rite, in conformity with the constant tendency of the Roman Church to regard as sacred

\* Ep. xxvii. 3. and xxviii. 2. Adv. Jud. lib. ii. c. 27: *baptizo* is used in quoting the same passage. Ep. lxxiii. 5 (var. lect. *tingo*;) lxxiii. 15. lxxiv. 2.

† Ep. lxxv. 11; *baptizo* lxii. 2.

‡ Suiceri Thesaurus Eccles. sub voce. ἀναδύω et βαπτίζω. He gives quotations from Tertullian (adv. Prax. c. 26. *tingo*;) Ambrose (De Sacramentis, lib. ii. c. 7. *mergo*;) Jerome (adv. Lucif. *mergito*;) Augustine (as cited by Gratianus in the 12th century, *demergo*.)

the terms by which sacred things were designated. The meaning of the words was, however, all this while well understood, and considered to be synonymous with the words mentioned above, which unquestionably mean *immerse*. We are not now inquiring, let it be remembered, whether this be the correct meaning of the Greek word βαπτίζω, in reference to the Christian ordinance, but merely endeavouring to ascertain what is the meaning of the Latin term derived from the Greek; and we find, if the Latin Fathers are to be taken as authorities, that this meaning was the same with *tingo, mērgo*. The Latin Version must then, in all fairness, be added to the number of those which render βαπτίζω by a word signifying *immerse*.

It will be quite apparent, from what has been already said, that the employment of the word *baptizo*, in the Latin translation, is a very different thing from what has of late been called *transference*.—Transference, according to the modern use of the term, as distinguished from translation, is giving the sound of the original word, instead of the idea conveyed by it. Instead of giving a word, or combination of letters, in the one language, corresponding in *idea* with a certain combination in the other, the identical combination, with some terminal or other modification to suit the genius of the new language is *transferred* into it, but *without conveying any idea*. In fact, he who transfers, makes the word. If the word be already in existence in both languages, and convey to the mind of the reader the same idea, the use of the word is to be regarded as translation, not transference. The word is common to both languages; and it is plainly of no importance to inquire how it came to be so, if only such is the fact when the translation is made. Thus we should give a translation of the Greek words ἀπόστολος,

ἄγγελος, ἐπιστολὴ, by the corresponding Latin words *apostolus*, *angelus*, *epistola*; and so of innumerable others. If, however, we were to render Κυριακὸν δεῖπνον, the phrase by which Paul designates “the Lord’s Supper,” by *Cyriacum deipnum*, we should transfer, not translate. In this way, *baptizo* was a translation of the Greek word when used in the Latin translation, having at that time acquired a definite meaning, and conveying an idea to the mind of the Latin reader. Whether it were the correct idea or not, is a point with which we have at present no concern. It is true, this may still be termed transference, the word having been originally Greek; but it is not transference in the sense in which that word has of late been employed, where the very object proposed is to convey no idea.

We should fully expect to find the Latin word *baptizo* in the languages which were derived from the Latin; and, accordingly, the French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and other modern versions in the languages of Europe, employ this term.

There is not precisely the same reason to expect the employment of the word in English, because the language is but in part derived from this source. And in point of fact, we find, that though the word *baptize* has now become as completely the English word for the Christian rite as *baptizo* is the Latin term, yet in the earliest translations it was not so. In the Anglo-Saxon period we have seen that the words *fullian* and *dyppan* were used. Wicklif, three or four centuries later, translates βαπτίζω, in several instances, by *wash*\*, once by *christent*. The following example will moreover show, that he uses the

\* Matt. iii. 6, 11; Mark vii. 4. x. 38, 39; Luke xi. 38.

† Acts xviii. 8.

two words, *wash* and *baptize*, in such a way as to show that he considered them to be synonymous;—Mark x. 38, 39; “Moun ye drinke the cuppe whiche I schal drynke or be waischen with the bapty[m] in which I am baptisid, and they seiden to him we moun: and Jhesus seide to hem, ye schulen drinke tho cuppe that I drinke and ye schulen be waischen with the bapty[m] in which I am baptisid.”

This use of the word by Wicklif is valuable for our present purpose, inasmuch as it furnishes, with respect to the English word, the same kind of evidence which has been already adduced in regard to the Latin, of its being, when it was used in a translation, a recognised English word with a known definite meaning. It cannot then fairly be accounted a transferred term when it was thus used. Though derived in English from the Latin and primarily from the Greek, it clearly was an English word equivalent to *wash*. Since the time of Wicklif it has been, as far as I am aware, the only term employed for the Christian rite in authorised translations of the New Testament.

The versions in other languages of the British Isles deserve a few words; though no satisfactory result can perhaps be attained from an examination of them. The Welsh translate βαπτίζω by *bedyddio*, the Irish by *baisdim*, and the Highland branch of the Gaelic by a word similar to the Irish. The words are now used solely for baptism. We might imagine that all the words had been formed from the Greek; though the resemblance certainly is not such as to lead to more than a very uncertain conjecture, should any one be disposed to adopt it. The Welsh seems, however, to be connected with the word

*Bad*, “a bath.” Bullet gives the following account of the word, which I translate from the French :\*—

“ *Bedydd*, Baptism. We see from the following article that it signifies ‘bath’ in general. See *Bad*.

“ *Bedyddfa*, Bath, place where persons wash themselves.

“ *Bedyddio*, to Baptize.

“ *Bad*, Bath, pl. *badcn*. *Bad* Teuton. Iceland. Runic, Flemish. *Bath*. Eng. *Baeth* A. S. *Baden* Germ. *Bata* Chald. bath. *Baa*, bath in Iceland and Swed. according to Rudbeck. See *Bad* water. It is the same word as *Bodd*; *a* and *o* being interchangeable.”

In Irish there seems to be the same connexion as in the Welsh between the word for ‘baptism’ and the noun signifying ‘water :’—

“ *Bais*, River-water.

“ *Baisde*, Baptism, to baptize.”†

Shaw, in his Gaelic Dictionary, gives,

“ *Baisladh*, Baptism, rain.

“ *Baisdeam*, to baptize, to dip.”

We have now gone through all the ancient versions which have been published; and noticed many modern ones in the course of our examination.

The conclusions to which the investigation leads us, are,

1. With regard to the ancient versions, in all of them, with three exceptions (viz. the Latin from the third cen-

\* Bullet *Memoires sur la Langue Celtique*, 3 tom. fol. 1759. *Dictionnaire Celtique*, sub voce.

tury, and the Sahidic and Basmuric,) the word βαπτίζω is *translated* by words purely native; and the three excepted versions adopted the Greek word, not by way of transference, but in consequence of the term having become current in the languages.

Of native words employed, the Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic, Coptic, Armenian, Gothic, and earliest Latin, all signify to *immerse*; the Anglo-Saxon, both to *immerse* and to *cleanse*; the Persic, to *wash*; and the Slavonic to *cross*. The meaning of the word adopted from the Greek, in Sahidic, Basmuric, and Latin, being also to *immerse*.

2. With regard to the modern versions examined, the Eastern generally adhere to the ancient Eastern Versions, and translate by words signifying to *immerse*. Most of the Gothic dialects, viz. the German, Swedish, Dutch, Danish, &c., employ altered forms of the Gothic word signifying to *dip*. The Icelandic uses a word meaning *cleanse*. The Slavic dialects follow the ancient Slavonic; and the languages formed from the Latin, including the English, adopt the word *baptizo*; though, with respect to the English, the words *wash* and *christen* were formerly used, as well as *baptize*.

It may perhaps be acceptable to place these results together in a tabular form, as follows:—

VERSION.	DATE.	WORD EMPLOYED.	MEANING.
SYRIAC:			
Peshito	2d cent.	Ⲫⲱⲡⲉ	<i>immerse.</i>
Philoxenian	6th cent.	"	"
ARABIC:			
Polyglott:	7th cent.(?)	مَبَغَعٌ, عَمِدٌ	<i>immerse.</i>
Propaganda	1671	"	"
Sabat	1816	"	"
PERSIC:	8th cent.(?)	شوییدن شستن	<i>wash.</i>
Modern (Martyn)	185	غسل	<i>ablution.</i>
ETHIOPIA ;	4th cent.	ጠጽፎ:	<i>immerse.</i>
Amharic	1822	" "	"
EGYPTIAN:			
Coptic	3d cent.	weec.	<i>immerse,</i>
Sahidic	2d cent.	} βαπτίζε	<i>plunge.</i>
Basmuric	3d cent.		
ARMENIAN	5th cent.	մկրտել	<i>immerse.</i>
SLAVONIC:	9th cent.	крестити	<i>cross.</i>
Russian	1519	} the same root.	"
Polish	1585		
Bohemian	1593		
Lithuanian	1660		
Livonian, or Lettish	1685		
Dorpat Esthonian,	1727		
&c. &c.			
GOTHIC:	4th cent.	daupjan	<i>dip.</i>
German	1522	taufen	"
Danish	1524	dobe	"
Swedish	1534	dopa	"
Dutch	1560	doopen	"
&c. &c.			
Iceiandic	1584	skira	<i>cleanse.</i>
ANGLO-SAXON	8th cent.	dyppan, fullian	<i>dip, cleanse.</i>
LATIN:			
The Early Fathers	2d cent.	tingo	<i>immerse.</i>
Ante-Hieronymian	3d cent.	baptizo	
Vulgate	4th cent.	"	
French	1535	baptiser	<i>bathe.</i>
Spanish	1556	bautizar	
Italian	1562	battezzare	
&c. &c.			
English: Wicklif	1380	{ wash, christen,	
Tindal	1526		
Welsh	1567		
Irish	1602		
Gaelic	1767	baptize	
		baptize	
		bedyddio	
		baisdim.	
		baisdeam.	



Our investigation, then, shows, that it has not been the practice of translators, until quite recent times, to adopt the plan of "transference" in respect to the word βαπτίζω. The word has been translated, in most instances, by a term strictly native; or where the term has been derived from the Greek, it appears to have become naturalized in the respective languages before the translation was made. There is no instance, until of late years, in which it can be shown that the translators *made* the word; and it well deserves the consideration of all who are engaged in translating, or disseminating translations of the word of God, how far such a plan is justifiable. It may indeed be said, that though the word βαπτίζω has not been thus transferred, other words have; and that thereby the *principle* of transference is countenanced by former translators. It is certain that such words, as proper names, and designations of things which are not known, and therefore have no word by which they can be expressed, must be so rendered; but what proof is there of translators, in general, carrying transference further than this? Let it be remembered, that the Greek language was closely united to the Latin, to which the appeal has been frequently made; and that on this account Greek words were continually naturalized in it. Such words we may expect to meet with; but to prove that translators *transferred* words in the modern sense of the term, it must be shown that words, the meaning of which might have been expressed in the language, were given, not only by terms derived from the Greek, but without meaning;—being made for the occasion, and purposely left without definition. It will not surely be said that the word βαπτίζω has no meaning,—that a command, involving, as most Christians believe, a thing to be done by or for every disciple, yet conveys no

definite idea of what is to be done. We are not now inquiring what that meaning is: every one who attempts to translate the word of God is bound to judge for himself on that point. Let him so judge, and give the result of his judgment.

The author may be allowed, in parting with those who have thought worth while to give him a hearing, to repeat what he said at the commencement,—that his object has been to ascertain the truth, not to further the views of any party. If his statements (which he has with great care endeavoured to make correct) should in any particulars be found to be erroneous, he will thankfully receive better information. Until, however, such errors are shown, he feels warranted in requesting those readers, who have not the means or information to attempt an examination of the versions, to receive as correct the statement of facts which he makes, and to judge fairly of the inferences deduced from them.

Finally, he must protest against its being supposed, that in adducing the authority of the different versions, his object is to make them the ultimate standard of appeal, either on this or on any other subject. His intention, in presenting their evidence in what he conceives to be a correct light, is rather, to bring these human authorities to bear testimony to the supreme regard which should be paid to the truth of God irrespective of the opinions and practices of men. And if the result of his labours should be to create in any instance a more profound reverence for God's word, and less reliance on human authority and opinion, he will feel that many toilsome hours of research have been amply repaid.







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